NAVAL AVIATION NEWS

Home from Hanoi

December 1973

NAVAL AVIATION NEWS

FIFTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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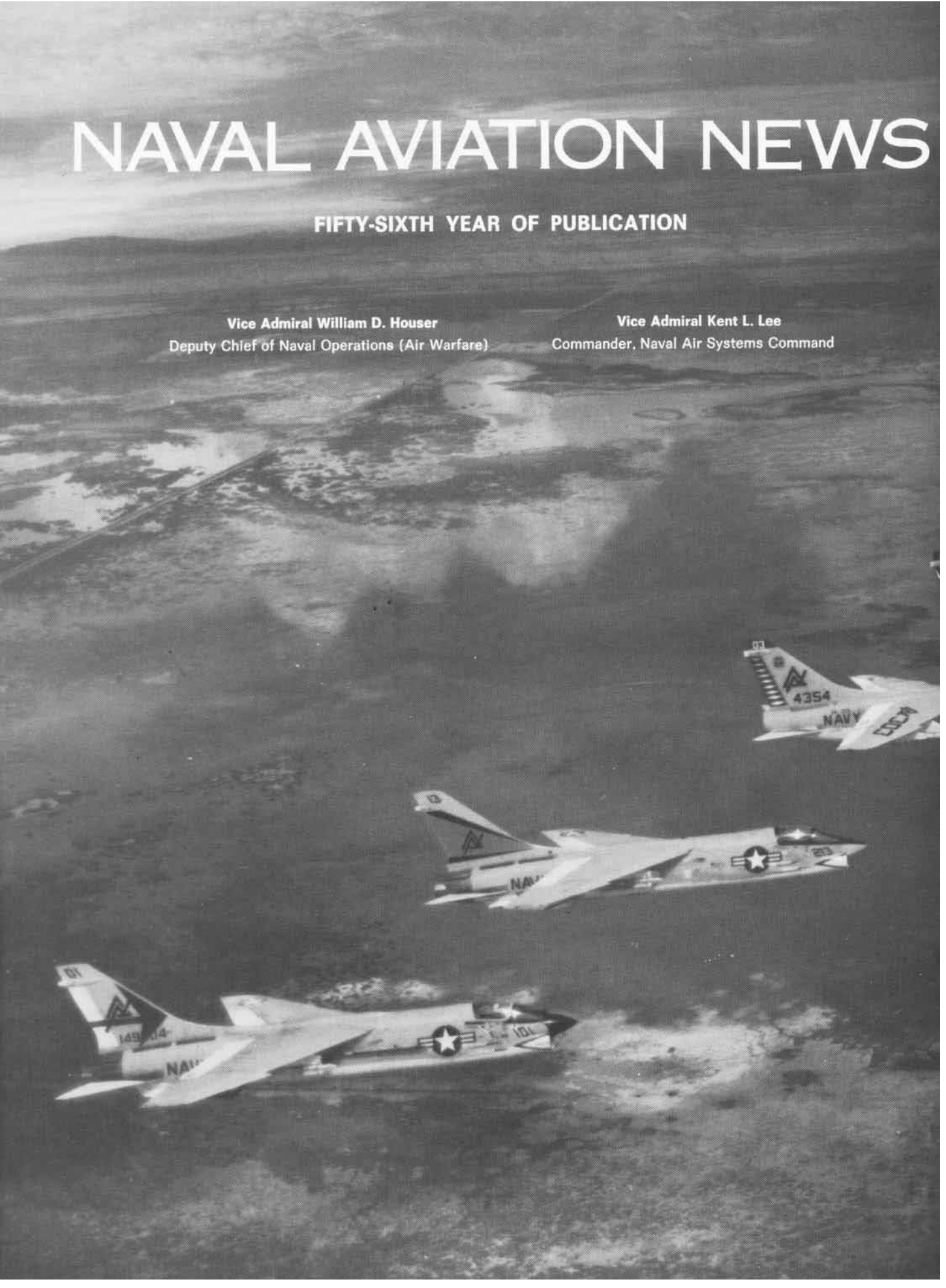

THE STAFF

COVERS — The photograph of the family of Cdr. Jack Fellowes, subject of our feature, was taken at the Naval Academy by JOCS Dick Benjamin. LCdr. R. G. Hoch, VFP-306, was flying an RF-8 when he captured these CVWR-30 aircraft during their Fallon deployment last summer.

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Necks craned, eyes searched the mist-shrouded, early morning horizon and more than one heart in the growing crowd of military and civilian onlookers skipped a beat. The jet-powered behemoth roared onto Alameda's north runway and spontaneous cheering erupted. A POW freedom flight had arrived from Hawaii and its precious cargo of American fighting men had ended another leg of their journey in Operation Homecoming.

At what seemed a snail's pace, the Starlifter taxied toward the impatient audience formed into a huge "V" by restraining ropes. A battery of cameras perched atop tripods stood waiting along a raised platform at the apex of the V. The giant transport finally stopped. Newsmen focused their machines along a path marked by a podium, arrayed with a spray of silver microphones, a red carpet which covered a strip of concrete running back to the forward end of the C-141, and the gleaming ship itself.

As the engines unwound, the disembarking ladder swung downward and a nervous silence swept the spectacle. Finally a voice broke the stillness.

"The senior member of this group of returning Prisoners of War — Captain Harry Jenkins, United States Navy!"

A burst of applause welcomed the Lincolnesque figure of the tall, gaunt Navy flyer. He walked directly to the microphones. His remarks were carefully and clearly delivered and, though the words were similar to those of other repatriated Americans, in their gratitude to the President and the people of our country, the speech carried its full measure of drama.

For the POWs on this and other flights loomed larger than life itself. Tall or short, sallow or flushed of face, they filed from the aircraft wearing strong, warm smiles. An Air Force B-52 aircrewman, borne on a stretcher and swathed in white sheets and blankets, proudly raised his arm with fingers forming a victory V. A crescendo of cheers greeted the gesture.

A Navy lieutenant commander passed jauntily, waving. Several women and children near a waiting bus held aloft a banner with his name in brightly colored letters enscribed on it. Seeing this, the officer charged toward them and gathered nearly all of them up in his arms.

As one Air Force colonel strode by, an apparent friend of his in the crowd shouted his name. The colonel slowed his pace and looked into the sea of faces, smiling but failing to recognize anyone. For those close enough to see, the colonel's expression could have embodied both the heart-lifting spirit and the doom-like travail which had characterized the ordeal of the POWs. Here was a man, his face lit with joy. Yet, his dark eyes appeared sunken and fatigued, each of them surrounded by a series of firmly etched concentric circles. Too, there was a trace of bewilderment in those eyes, at the resounding welcome, which, for eternal days and nights of the horrible past, had seen little more than filthy confining walls and the forbidding forms of his captors.

One veteran combat flyer in the audience later confided, "It was a bit difficult to keep a dry eye out there. You know I had the feeling that 'There, but for the grace of God, go I.' "

Commander Jack Fellowes, whose story of captivity appears in this issue, represents an impressive example of the many who suffered at the hands of the North Vietnamese. When we mentioned to another ex-POW that we were doing a story on Cdr. Fellowes, that officer voiced a phrase which is fitting for each of those who were captured. "Jack Fellowes? Oh, yes, he was a real tough one."

This month, Jack Fellowes will be enjoying his first Christmas in eight years. He told us in the interview that "I sincerely regret losing those years but I'm very lucky. My family has done so well that I'm continually impressed with them. I look forward to the future and feel I can contribute to the Navy."

He takes unusually rewarding delight in his recently gained freedom and, in a sense, appreciates his life far more than most of us who never faced years of deprivation and torture. He's up before the sun these days and enjoys the simple pleasure of opening the door of his home and being able to wander around his yard in the morning quiet. "Just to feel the grass under my feet," he says, "is a pleasure."

It was a bit startling to hear him add, "I wouldn't really welcome the opportunity but, if I had to, I'd go through it again. I feel that strongly about this country of ours."

Which calls to mind a rhetorical question voiced by a character in James A. Michener's 1953 novel, The Bridges of Toko Ri. *A Navy carrier pilot had been shot down over North Korea and ultimately killed by ground troops despite gallant but futile efforts to rescue him. Alone on the flag bridge, Admiral Tarrant intoned words which, in more recent years, have been recalled with some innocuous cynicism by a newer generation of flyers.*

"Why is America lucky enough to have such men? They leave this tiny ship and fly against the enemy. Then they must seek the ship, lost somewhere at sea. And when they find it, they have to land upon its pitching deck. Where did we get such men?"

As Americans we have to be very thankful for such men, and most especially for those who made the ultimate sacrifice and did not return from the battlefield. Perhaps it is not so important to know from where these men come. It is vital, however, to realize that we did, and still do, have them.

did you know?

Viking BIS Trials

Board of Inspection and Survey (BIS) trials are under way on the S-3A *Viking* at the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Md. Seven *Vikings* are undergoing extensive testing to determine the service acceptability of the carrier-based ASW aircraft. The four-month BIS is being done by teams working two shifts a day, six days a week. Participating are 16 engineering test pilots, three test flight officers, six enlisted aircrewmen, 20 engineers and technicians and 195 military and civilian maintenance personnel. When the trials are completed, S-3As will have flown over 2,500 hours in 1,200 flights.

New NASA Projects

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has requested bids from the aerospace industry to build two shuttle training aircraft (STAs) for flight crew training simulating space shuttle operations. The STAs are to be capable of simulating the flying characteristics, performance and trajectory of the space shuttle, *Orbiter*, during atmospheric flight. They will be used to simulate approach and landing techniques for normal and abort operations and for powered flight required for space shuttle ferry operations. Design of the training aircraft will allow for possible future installation of actual *Orbiter* avionics flight hardware. A one-day conference on the use of lasers for hydrographic studies was recently held at NASA's Wallops Station in Virginia. NASA scientists, engineers and technicians reviewed the station's activities in the use of laser/light detection and ranging equipment in overwater surveillance from aircraft. Using improved remote sensing techniques, the laser fluorosensor can map, identify and help to determine the extent of algae, oil spills or sewage in water areas.

Changes of Command

Rear Admiral Robert P. Coogan, Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air Warfare), relieves Rear Admiral Wesley L. McDonald this month as Commander, Carrier Group Three. RAdm. Coogan will be relieved by Rear Admiral John S. Christiansen, Director of Aviation Plans and Requirements, DCNO(Air Warfare). In February, RAdm. McDonald will relieve Rear Admiral James Ferris as Chief of Naval Air Training. RAdm. Ferris' new post has not been announced.

Gramps in Albuquerque

Planes flown by civil pilots differ considerably from military aircraft, but errors made in various cockpits are often the same. *Naval Aviation News*' "Grampaw Pettibone" has an important readership in the Albuquerque area where operators of local airports are using monthly posters featuring Gramps as a safety tool. LCdr. Harry Davidson, PAO of NARDiv N-5, Kirtland AFB, N.M., presents a poster to Dan Mueller, a plane dealer and operator at the Albuquerque International Airport.

did you know?

Successful F-14 Test

A direct hit on a maneuvering target marked the first test of the F-14's quick-reaction dogfight system. In the simulated dogfight with a QT-33 drone, the system permitted the pilot to launch a *Sparrow*, without waiting for a radar system lock, the moment the *Tomcat* achieved a position on the tail of the drone. The dogfight system features a small "flood" antenna in the nose of the F-14 to illuminate the target for the semiactive, radar-guided *Sparrow*. In a dogfight, the antenna automatically provides target illumination. The system provides a fighting capability in a combat situation when a casualty prevents full operation of the aircraft's avionics system.

Foreign Students at Chase

Six flight students from the Singapore armed forces are undergoing advanced jet training in the TA-4J *Skyhawk* at NAS Chase Field, Tex. The only part of the 20-week syllabus they will not receive is carrier qualification. After their training at NAS Chase Field, the students will transfer to NAS Lemoore, Calif., where they will complete transition to the A-4. Forty-two more flight students from Singapore will complete the training in the next two years. At right, Lt. Goh Chye Lee begins preflight brief with flight instructor Capt. Bill Isbell, U.S. Marine Corps.

ACE

A program called aircraft condition evaluation (ACE) is under way at the Naval Air Rework Facility (NARF), MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. Its aim is to improve aircraft readiness through proper maintenance evaluation. Previously, aircraft went to the NARF for overhaul at prescheduled times, such as the end of each 30-month period for an F-4. This occurred regardless of aircraft condition. Under the ACE program, an examination and evaluation team reviews each aircraft due for a scheduled overhaul. If overhaul is deemed unnecessary, the date can be extended. If damage is discovered, the aircraft will be repaired by its owner, an intermediate level maintenance squadron or the NARF, depending on the extent of the damage. With the new program, according to NARF officials, aircraft will receive the proper maintenance at the necessary time, improving aircraft readiness.

Nice Round Number

Commands at Training Air Wing One recently passed the one million flight-hour mark. VTs 7, 9 and 19, and the naval air station amassed the million hours in the air during the more than ten years that student Naval Aviators have been training at NAS Meridian, Miss.

S-2 Fire Fighters

The Navy has released the first six of 50 S-2 *Trackers* to the state of California for use in its aerial fire-fighting force. They were formerly used as trainers and for logistic support at NAS Corpus Christi, Tex. The other 44 S-2s will be flown to California from the Davis Monthan AFB aircraft storage facility in Tucson, Ariz. In early 1971, the Navy loaned an S-2 to the U.S. Forest Service for testing as an aerial tanker. That June the Navy agreed to turn over four additional *Trackers* on a 15-year lease for further testing by the Forest Service, the California Division of Forestry and state air tanker operators. Eight-hundred-gallon tanks were mounted in two of these aircraft early this year. The first S-2 air tanker was placed in service on June 17 and made its first drop the same day.

Mercy Missions

Lieutenants Jim Drager and Dave Hartsough of HS-1 were conducting routine flight operations in their SH-3 out of NAS Jacksonville, Fla., when the Coast Guard requested assistance with rescue efforts 22 miles off the coast. The *Sea King* was soon hovering 40 feet above a 31-foot fishing boat that was taking on water and in danger of sinking. The rescue sling was lowered eight times to retrieve passengers and crew. In another incident, a distress call was received from a private plane flying over Jacksonville. The pilot had electrical problems and lost all lighting and navigation gear in the middle of rain showers. The call was answered by a P-3 *Orion* from VP-56. Pilot Lt. Vic Fox and copilots Lieutenants Kevin Buckley and Tom Dyer located the aircraft, slowed down and led the way to a well-lit runway where the grateful civilian pilot made a safe landing.

Another First

Ltjg. Harry P. Hoffman is the first medical student completing part of his senior year studies in aerospace medicine at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute, Pensacola, Fla. He is a senior in the Navy's scholarship program at Hahneman Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa. Captain Robert C. McDonough, NAMI commanding officer, hopes more medical students will be able to take advantage of the same opportunity if the program meets the requirements of medical school deans.

A Lift for a Lady

An H-2 *Seasprite* from NAF Naples, Italy, became part of a legend when it helped return the 250-year-old Madonna Addolorata to the Church of Santa Brigida in Naples. The statue's legend began early in the 19th century when it was said to have saved a family from death. It was recently flown to a northern Italian city where craftsmen repaired and repainted it to hide the traces of time. However, officials found they could not transport the Madonna from the Naples airport back to the church without damaging the newly applied finish and they asked for help from the Naval Air Facility.

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Again, Again, Again . . .

A young Naval Aviator with approximately 1,000 hours was scheduled for a day field mirror landing practice (FMLP) session in an EKA-3B *Skywarrior*. His crew consisted of an NFO and enlisted aircrewmen. Following a normal brief, preflight, turnup and taxi, the *Skywarrior* departed for a nearby outlying field for FMLPs.

After an uneventful FMLP period, the EKA-3B departed the outlying field under positive control in VFR conditions. Upon contacting home-field GCA, the flight crew proceeded with the landing checklist to the point where flaps were lowered. At this point, crew checklist procedures were interrupted by the GCA controller who reported the surface winds and asked if they desired a different runway. In view of the wind conditions, the pilot decided to use a different runway and transmitted his intention to the controller. A frequency change to tower was performed and initial contact made. The pilot reported "dirty" (gear and flaps down) and requested clearance direct from present position to the 180-degree position for the runway.

The *Skywarrior* was cleared as requested and directed to report with wheels. The pilot rogered this transmission and proceeded direct to the 180-degree point. But during this time, the crew did not restart or continue the landing checklist because the pilot had already erroneously called the aircraft "dirty" and the crew was also concerned with maintaining a visual lookout as they passed through the traffic area.

At the 190-degree position, the aircraft reported "616, with gear." There was no response from the tower and the *Skywarrior* reported with gear again; however, there was still no response from the tower.

Concerned with a possible lost comm situation, the pilot instructed the NFO to tune in ground control frequency on the alternate radio in case landing clearance was not received from the

tower. The NFO had resumed the landing checklist by calling "flaps" to which the pilot responded flaps and gear were down. The pilot states that he looked at all the indications but misinterpreted "up" indications for the wheels.

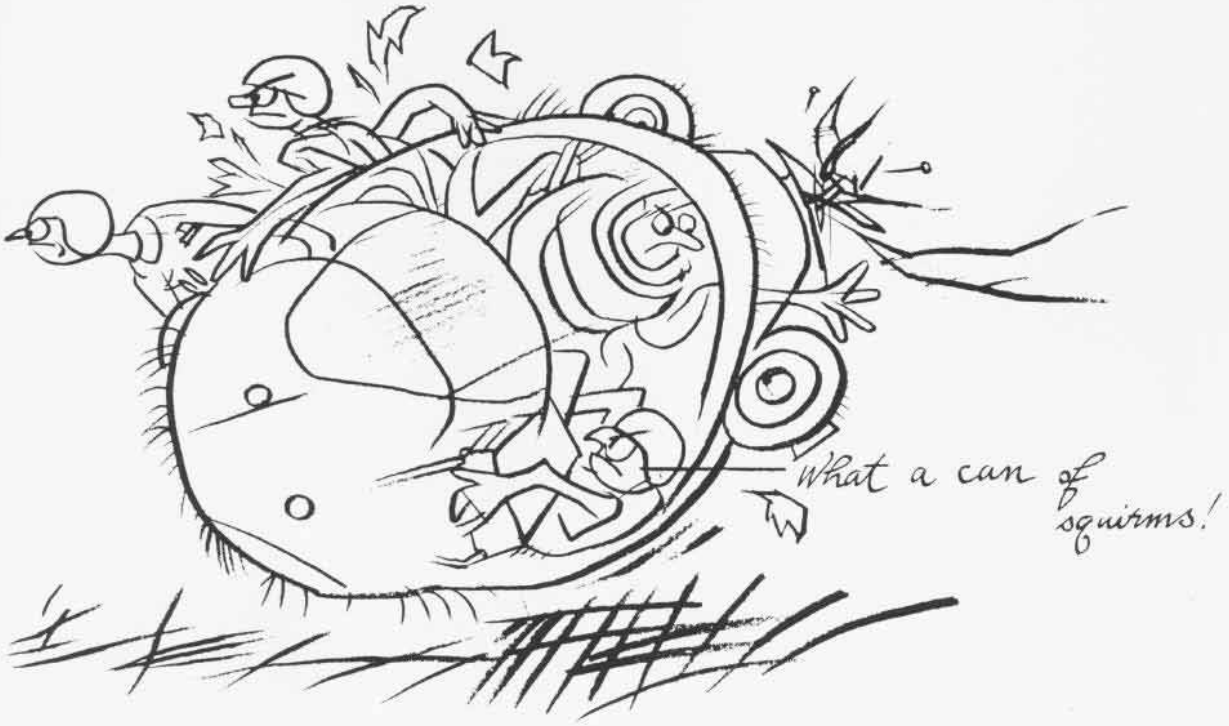
At this point in the approach, the aircraft was turning onto final and the pilot made another transmission to tower reporting the gear. The tower responded, told the pilot to check wheels, reported winds and gave the aircraft landing clearance. The pilot corrected for a slightly high, overshooting start and continued the approach to the runway. After touchdown, he stated he felt a large vibration and thought he had a nose-gear problem, so he lowered the hook and engaged the short field arresting gear. As the aircraft came to a stop, 3,000 feet down the runway, the pilot checked the gear indicators and gear handle and found the *landing gear in the up position.*

The crew exited the aircraft through the upper hatch and stood by as the crash truck arrived and extinguished the smoke coming from the bomb-bay area. The crew was uninjured. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Not again! Must we continue these Delta Sierra maneuvers? It sure is amazin' when we see all of these

ILLUSTRATED BY Osborn



"minus-the-rollers" landings that involve all of the same thing — distraction of some kind in the cockpit during completion of the checklist. To top it all off, most wheels-up landings are made by multiseat flyin' machines. I know this doesn't make the "many seat" drivers happy, but that's the facts of life. I can only say one thing — whenever you are in the landing pattern and you are distracted, let that be the *switch* in your mind that you have now entered the area where you are a prime candidate for a minus-the-rollers touchdown. Nuff sed!

Night Autorotation

Two Naval Aviators were scheduled for a two-hour night instrument check in an H-2 *Seasprite*. The aircraft commander, the check pilot, was a lieutenant commander with considerable flying experience. The rest of the crew consisted of a lieutenant junior grade copilot and two enlisted crew members. Preflight was normal, as was engine run-up, and the helicopter became airborne slightly after 2000.

The helo entered a simulated holding pattern for approximately 10 to 12 minutes. During this time, the crew members in the back were out of their seats and had their gunner belts on. Control of the aircraft changed hands several times between the two pilots, since one was studying approach plates.

The lieutenant commander was flying the aircraft on a heading of roughly 090 degrees when he noticed a small change in the vibration rate, which lasted eight to ten seconds. This was followed by a loud bang and a heavy, high frequency and audible vibration which could be felt in the flight controls. The aircraft went out of balanced flight and was partially corrected by the pilot. He informed the crew they were going down and commenced autorotation.

The crew opened the doors on each side of the aircraft, sat down and fastened their lap belts. The aircraft decelerated from about 90 knots to 75 knots. The pilot made a left-hand turn toward the field of intended landing.

The copilot radioed Mayday, the gear was lowered and the landing lights were turned on. At about 1,000 feet, the pilot didn't think the aircraft would clear the trees surrounding the intended landing site and secured both engines. At treetop level, the pilot had killed off most ground speed and, when he could no longer hold it, he pulled the collective up and held it against his left rib cage.

The rate of descent stopped briefly, then the helo descended through the trees, rolled to the left and impacted the ground on its left side. All crew members remembered noticing the tremendous amount of dust in the air and the smell of fuel.

One of them exited first after breaking out the window of the right door, which had partially closed during descent through the trees. The other crewman remembers tree branches striking him through the open left-hand door during descent and being suspended by his lap belt after impact. He released himself and exited second.

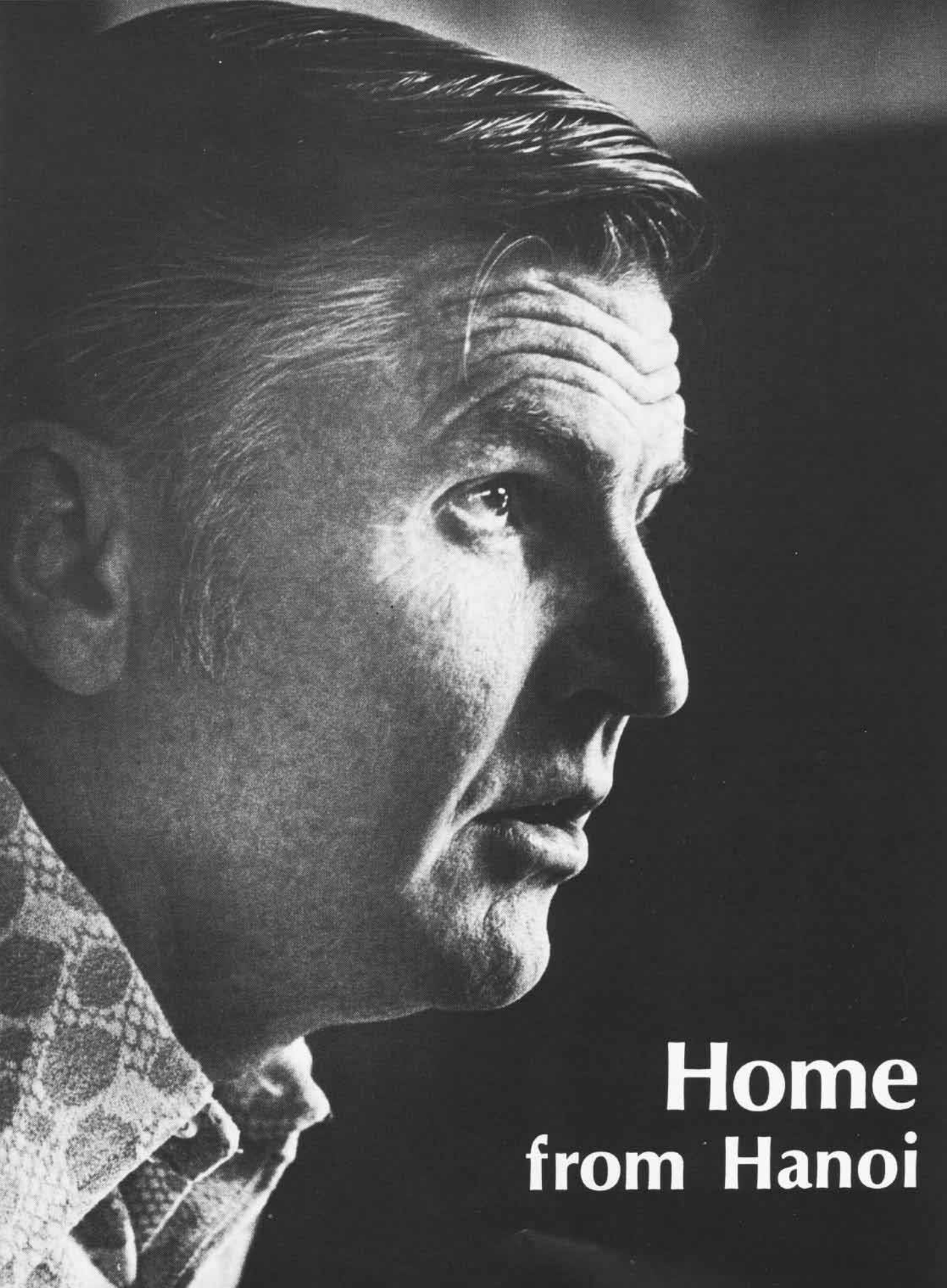
The copilot's seat tore loose from the aircraft on impact and he found himself on the left side of the cockpit. He loosened his harness, stood up, knocked out some glass from a window and exited third.

The pilot tried to crawl straight out the top of the aircraft but realized he couldn't — there was a seat on top of him. He freed himself, threw the seat to the rear and climbed up and out a window. The four men assembled in a field, clear of the aircraft, and checked for injuries. There were no serious injuries. The aircraft was a total loss.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy mackerel! This was a hairy one — appears that somethin' went wrong with the tail rotor and it came off!

All I can say is this driver was really cool — did everything just right. A well done to the aircraft commander and his crew.



Home from Hanoi

The following account is based on an interview with Commander Jack Fellowes who was shot down over North Vietnam on August 27, 1966. Then a lieutenant commander, he was flying an A-6 *Intruder* from VA-65 based aboard USS *Constellation*. With him was LCdr. George Coker, then a lieutenant junior grade, his B/N. For six years and seven months of brutal imprisonment, they shared an ordeal with a very special group of American fighting men who struggled through endless days of unbelievably atrocious treatment at the hands of the North Vietnamese. LCdr. Coker, a bachelor, is now with VA-42. Cdr. Fellowes, whose love of athletics was a major factor in his ability to survive, is now assigned as Assistant Physical Education Officer at his alma mater, the U.S. Naval Academy. He resides there with his wife, Pat, and their four children, Cathy, John, Jr., Sharon and Tommy.

By Commander Rosario Rausa

Photos by PH1 H. D. Phillips, CCGLant

NANews: Jack, what was your target and how were you shot down?

Fellowes: It was a pontoon bridge 30 miles inland from Vinh which is a major city along the central North Vietnamese coast. As my wingman and I crossed the beach, I got the feeling our ECM gear wasn't working properly and I felt, considering the area, we should have been getting some steady indications. I observed the target as we arrived at the pop-up point for the roll in. Just as I began to pull up, at about 3,500 feet, we were hit. The aircraft immediately flipped inverted. The stick was frozen. I tried to right the plane without success. We were bouncing around quite wildly and I noticed my ejection handle face curtain had come loose and was draped over my shoulder. I looked over at George, convinced I couldn't regain control of the aircraft. "Get out!" I yelled. He didn't answer. Being the senior man and noting our rather rapid loss of altitude, I exercised my leadership and preceded him in the ejection.

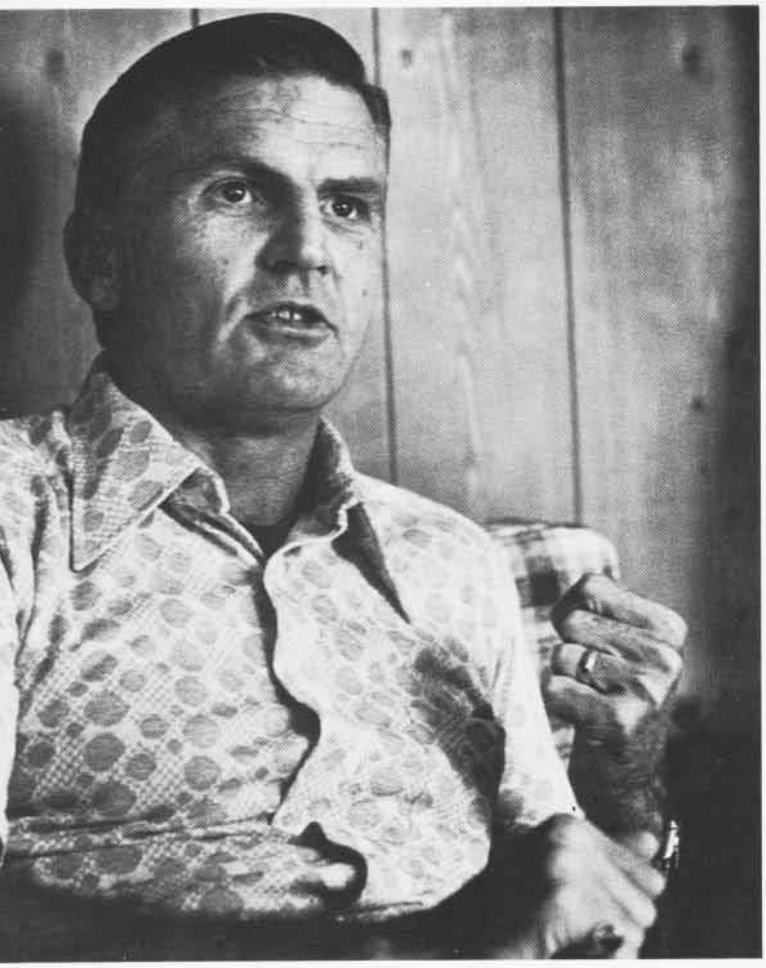
Upside down?

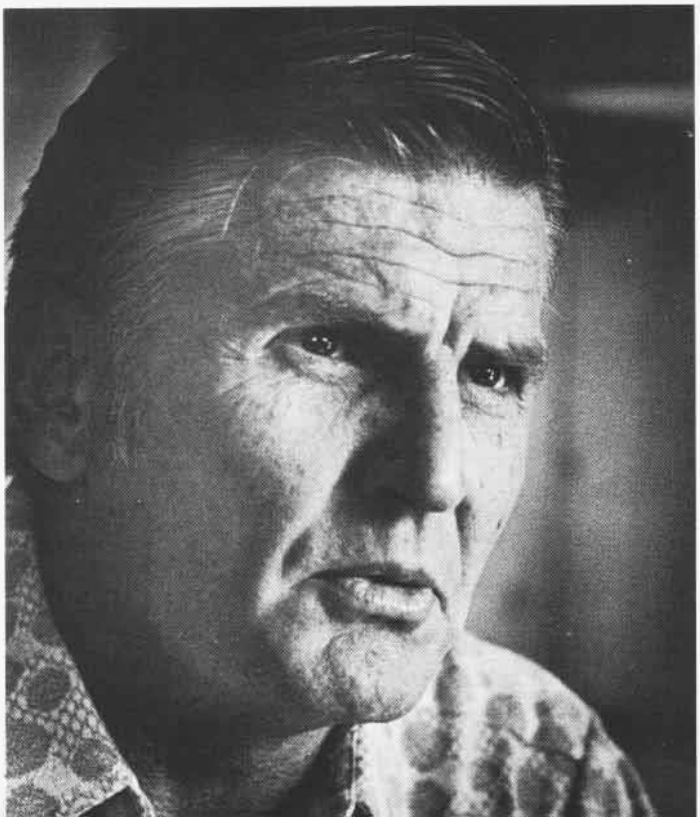
Yes, inverted at about 2,000 feet. The nose was dropping through and it felt as though the plane were bobbing back and forth. Years later I still wondered if we had gotten out too fast; that perhaps I might have regained control if we'd hung on a few more seconds. I ultimately learned from my wingman that our right wing had been blown off. The *Intruder* went into a flat spin and crashed.

The seat worked and, as I descended, I looked up and saw a huge burst of red smoke. I felt it was the remnant of an 85mm explosion. It might have been a *Sam* but I'm sure that a *Sam* burst, in close like that, would have blown us completely out of the sky.

Then I looked below and saw a hill with flat ground adjacent to it and a hamlet nearby. I pulled one riser in an attempt to steer toward the hill, but I was too late and plunged to the deck on the level ground. I felt a strong jolt in my back as I struck earth. I was told later that I had suffered a compression fracture. Pushed a few vertebrae together. I had some other bumps and cuts and was hurting but determined to get to that hill. Unfortunately, it looked bigger from

'. . . even with all its faults, there is nothing better than to be from America . . . .'





'Amazingly,

aloft than from where I now found myself. Turns out my hill was nothing more than a rise of about 15 feet. I ran up this knoll and shots rang out. The North Vietnamese were running toward me, firing away.

Rifle fire?

Yes. As I reached the top of the knoll, I saw a hundred or so people about half a football field away, running toward me. They looked like farmers but all seemed to have weapons. I turned around and no more than eight feet from me stood a young girl sans a firearm, wearing an expression which said "Do you drop in often?" At this point it was clear to me that my prospects of becoming a prisoner were very good. I sat down, got my emergency radio out and tried to make contact with some planes which had come overhead. "If you're going to come and get me," I announced, "you better hurry." I had two hand grenades in my flight suit leg pockets which the Marines aboard ship had given me. Had rescue been imminent they might have been useful, but I got rid of them and broke the radio antenna so the Vs (North Vietnamese) couldn't use the radio to lure Res-CAP planes into a trap. Then I sat down and pulled out a cigar from my shin pocket.

A cigar?

Yes, I carried them in that pocket. I peeled the wrapper and brought the cigar to my mouth. I was about to light it when, suddenly, a hand came from behind my head and yanked the stogie from me. This gesture convinced me that I was in less than amicable hands. Anyone who would steal a man's cigar is definitely unfriendly.

I wasn't afraid or, if fear was there, I didn't recognize it as such.'

Would you describe your range of emotions? Were you shaking with fear or just too busy to be afraid?

Amazingly, I wasn't afraid, or, if fear was there, I didn't recognize it as such. My mind was busy as hell. My reactions, I think, were somewhat automatic as per survival training. At no time did I get the feeling I was going to die. Yet I cannot give you a reason why I felt this.

Had you seen George at all?

No. I was unsure if he'd even gotten out of the plane.

What happened after your cigar was stolen?

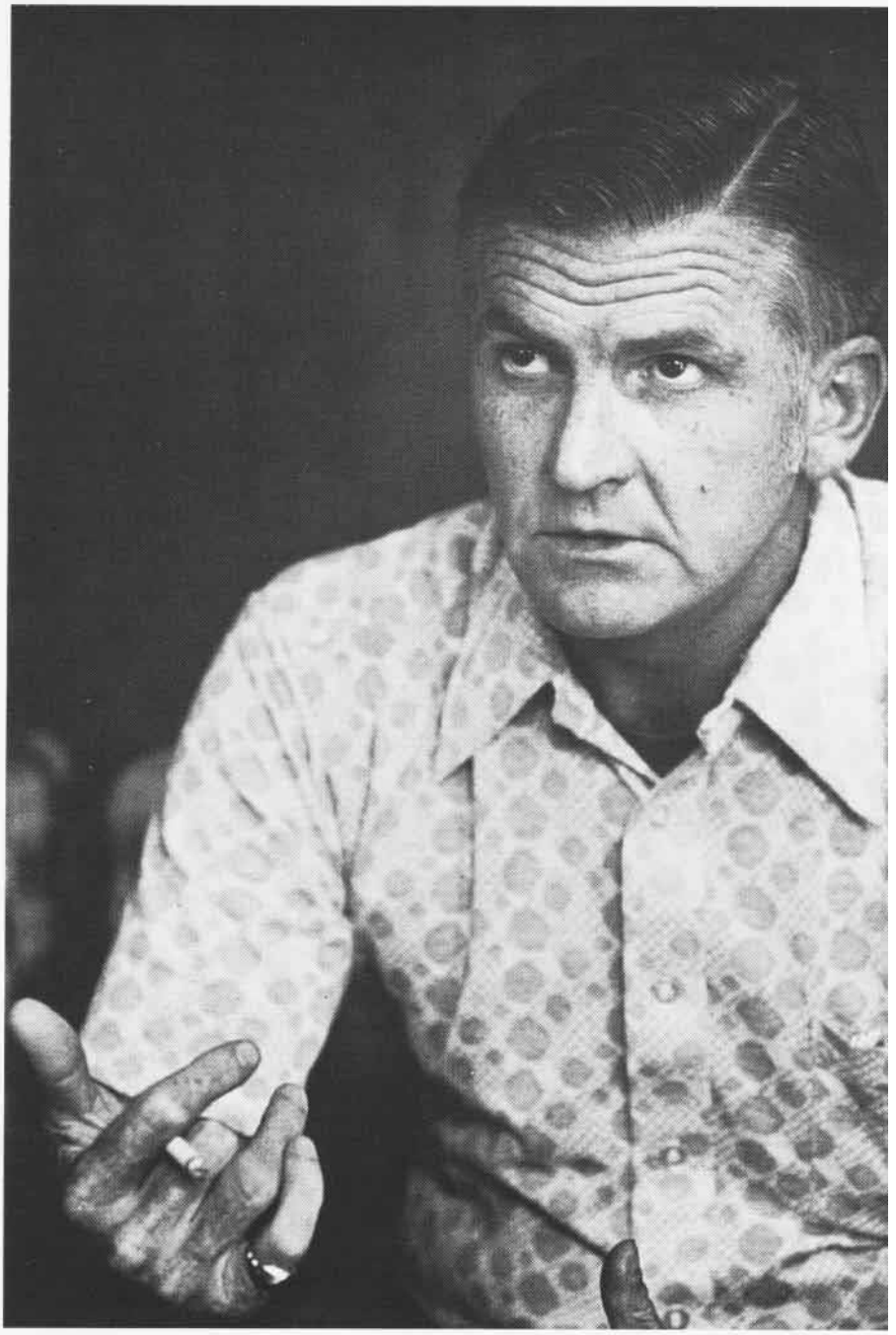
Another V came up to me and in broken English said, "Give me your gun." I said, "No, you take it from me." I'd heard stories about guys handing over their weapons. Arm movements would be misinterpreted and a nervous-fingered V would shoot them outright.

You were able to remember that?

Surprisingly enough, for a guy who had not been particularly noted for his genius of thought, I was thinking pretty good. The truth is I'd had sound military training; my family has had many members in the military and my mind just seemed to trigger off the right reactions.

Could you hear other aircraft circling above as you were being captured?

I heard the noise of jet engines but saw no airplanes. Shortly after the people encircled me, I was hustled off the hill, stripped of all my gear except boots and flight suit, tied to a clump of small trees and blind-



'I began to believe that I was, in fact, going to be a prisoner – but only for about six months.'

folded. I was able to peer over the top of the blindfold but didn't see planes. I later learned that an A-4 was lost in the attempt to get us out. Shortly, one of the Vs began probing with his hands around my undershorts. It occurred to me that I was about to sustain a sexual assault. But then I remembered the Dengler story* and concluded they were just looking for something hidden there. However, this guy still moved his hands over my abdomen and eventually stopped.

I think they may have been astonished at my size. I weighed 200 pounds and they were, generally, small people. It was as if they were saying "Look at this fat one!" While this was going on, one of the Vs saw me sneaking a peek over the blindfold and thrust his hand, then his armpit across my eyes — frankly, I preferred the hand.

How long were you tied up?

About half an hour. They then escorted me to a little way station where some mercurochrome was put on my cuts. Then I walked till about six or seven that night. For some reason they periodically took my boots away, then gave them back to me, so my feet were really hurting. I was placed in a little hut and given a bowl which contained about three tablespoons of rice. I also had some greens — uncooked, hard and tasteless. There were some little old ladies in the hut and they gave me tea. I had ten cups of it. I was extremely thirsty and they kept giving it to me.

Was there any opportunity for escape up to this juncture?

No. I began to believe that I was, in fact, going to be a prisoner — but only for about six months. This war would definitely be over by then.

So, when you went down you really felt you would experience a bad scene but —

I'd hike it out for six months. A large number of us had this philosophy.

What happened after you ate?

We walked again, through the dark. When daylight came, we stopped and I was kept in a hut but not

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*** Ed's note: Dieter Dengler was an A-1 pilot shot down in the early stages of the war and held captive periodically until, after several escape attempts, he finally eluded his captors long enough to be rescued by helicopter. Dengler had planted two hundred dollars in his shorts for emergency use if captured.**

allowed to sleep. I would doze for a moment but be poked awake. I had shooting pains in my back and my feet were killing me. I wore thick athletic socks which were caked with mud and debris.

Three days later we reached the first interrogation point, in a village on the outskirts of Vinh. In a little shack, I was confronted with an English-speaking North Vietnamese who identified himself as a professor at Hanoi University on TAD, it seems, as an interrogator. I should mention that during this period I was vividly aware of time. I would remember, for example, when it was chow time back on the ship. I'd think of guys sitting down to steaks or meatloaf in the wardroom and, as more and more of these segments of time ticked off, the more I became aware that I was a prisoner of war.

Had you been beaten during this time?

Slapped around quite a bit but not beaten up. I did get poled once. One of the natives jammed a wooden rod into my chest unexpectedly and, although it didn't knock me unconscious, it stunned the hell out of me and I fell to the ground.

Anyway I told the interrogator my name, rank, serial number and date of birth. He asked the name of my ship and I noticed he held a frequency card from *Constellation*—so he knew anyway. The card must have been collected from the crash site. They rather abruptly tied my elbows behind me with ropes and made me kneel. I was totally exhausted and fell headfirst onto the professor's table. The guards yanked me upright. The professor then said, "I do not accept name, rank and serial number." He paused, looked at me, then went on, "I can and will have you killed."

When a man rants and raves at you and threatens to take your life, you tend to feel he's more frustrated than serious. But, when a man coldly and deliberately stares at you and icily says, "I can have you killed," you believe him.

He asked me about the A-6's radar. I told him the A-6 didn't have radar. He inquired about night flying missions and I said the A-6 isn't flown at night which, of course, was an interesting lie since half our sorties were after sunset. I further informed him that John Wayne was an *Intruder* pilot in my squadron but refused combat duty and was ordered to remain in the States.

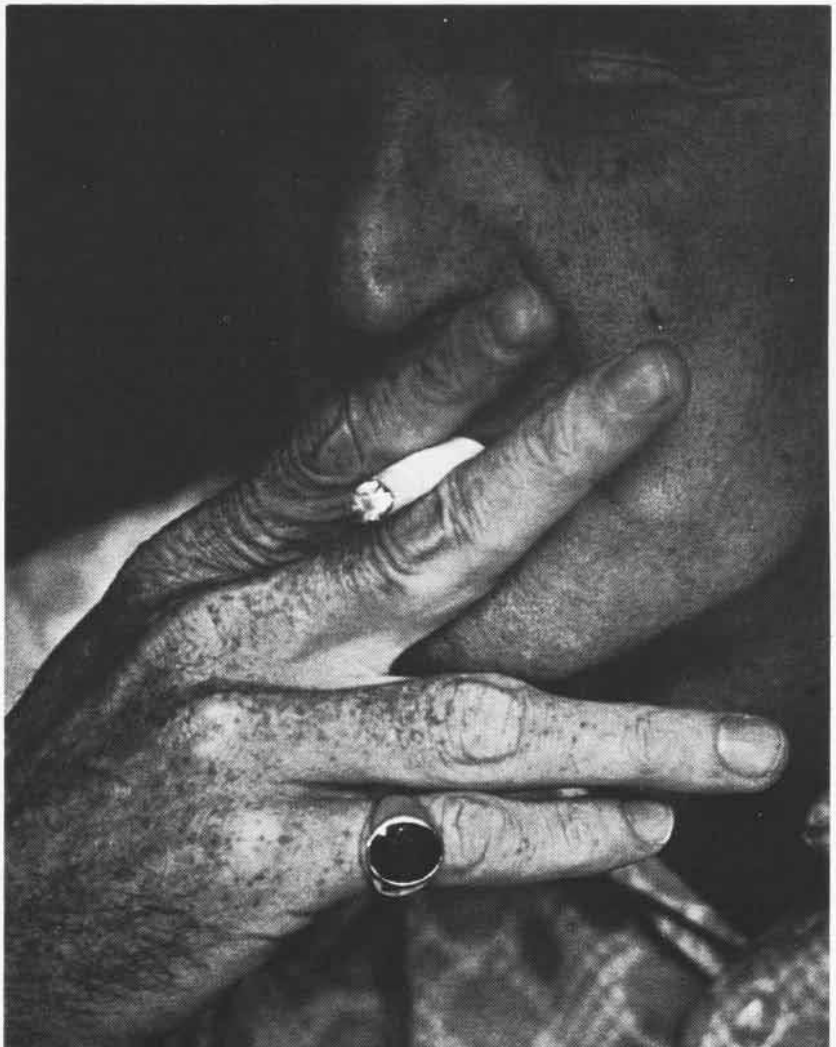
All this time, unknown to me, they were working on George in another hut, comparing notes.

Did this information satisfy him?

Apparently. We were held four days without further questioning. Then George and I were loaded on a large size, jeep-type vehicle for the four-day trip to Hanoi. We traveled at night and during the day were placed in huts, separated and forbidden to communicate. Of course we tried to talk and when caught were batted around with some violence.

We had a bad scare one day. George had a severe open wound just above his knee that pained him considerably. A machete-carrying guard came in as we were lying down and stood above me with the

'I do not accept name, rank and serial number. I can and will have you killed.'



business edge of that long knife aimed at a point just above my foot. He raised the machete and swung it downward. At the last microsecond, he twisted the blade so the flat side struck my leg. It hurt like hell but if he hadn't turned the edge I'd be minus one foot. This guy went over to George and did the same thing. Except he scored a direct hit on George's wound. My B/N jumped about six feet in the air with blinding pain.

On this journey we had a few rocks heaved our way and, on occasion, local political leaders whipped the populace into a frenzy of hate. Overall I would say the people were more stunned by us than anything else.

George and I did try to sneak a few words to compare notes and ensure our stories were similar in forthcoming interrogations. For example, we agreed on a few names of squadron pilots to give the Vs if we were asked — names of flyers previously transferred to stateside duty. After the fourth night, we arrived at the Hanoi Hilton and were separated. I didn't see George again until December 25, 1970.

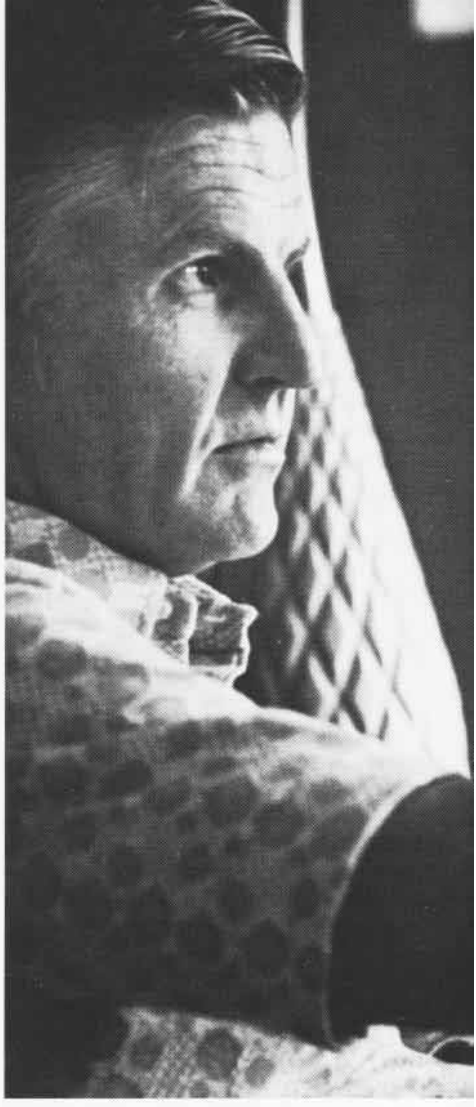
What were your immediate impressions of the Hilton?

I'd seen places like it in a city or two on Med-cruise liberty. Dumpy, dirty, really filthy. I was taken to a room called the Star Chamber. There were two shaded lights in the corners and one bare-bulbed lamp on a desk. The scene reminded me of ones I'd seen in war movies.

A grey-haired North Vietnamese who spoke excellent English came in, smoking a cigarette. He didn't offer me one but started shooting the questions. The first were similar to the ones at Vinh. Then he asked about other squadrons on the ship. "Which ones were they?" he asked. "I just reported aboard and don't know," I answered. "I was only on my fifth mission." In fact, it was my 55th. "What is the number designation of the A-6 TACAN set?" he asked. I hate to confess this in *Naval Aviation News*, but I don't know the number of the TACAN set — APN-14 or something like that.

Six hours of questioning later, the camp commander came in and told me how it could be good in prison if I wanted it to be. He directed me to fill out a biography form which contained blanks relating to insurance policies, the number of cars I owned, etc. I decided this was none of their business, wrote down name, rank and serial number and put the word "none" in the remaining blanks. He didn't appreciate that.

'I was blindfolded and lay on the floor completely trussed up. I have to admit that I became very frightened.'



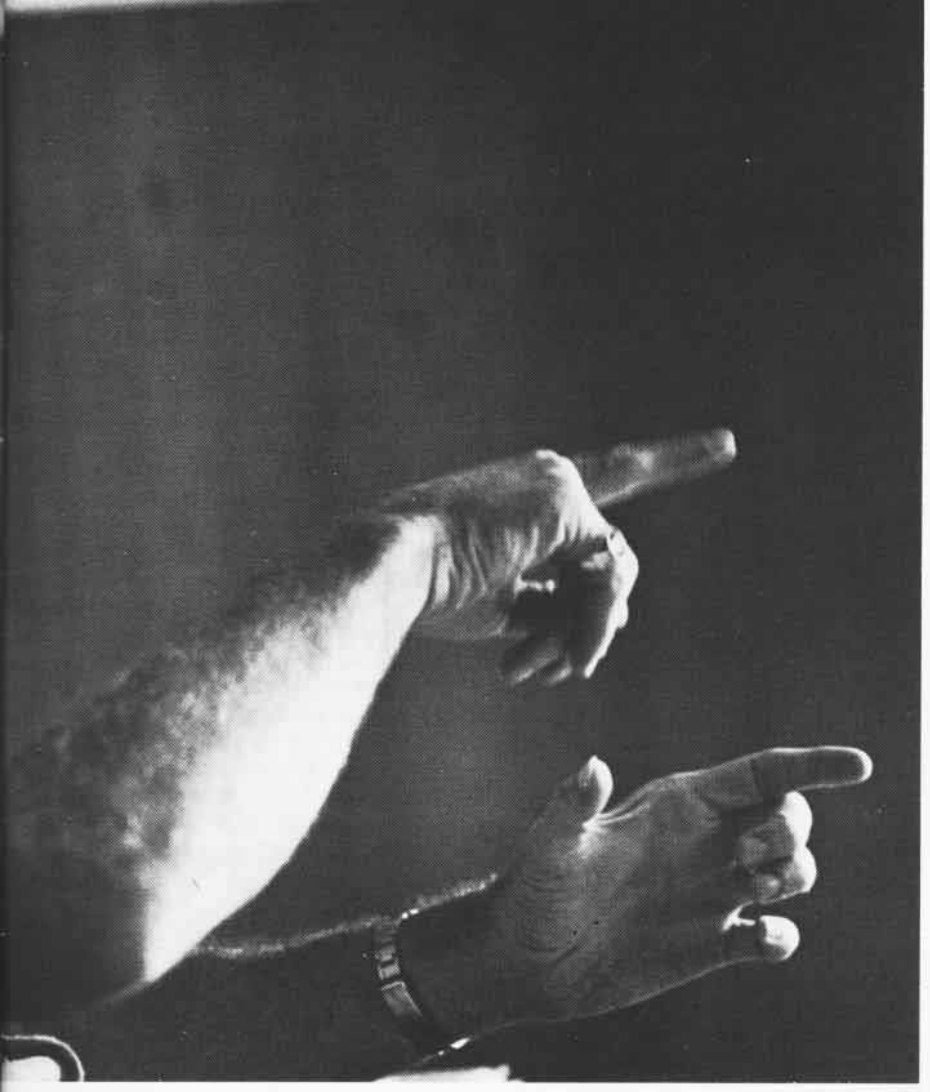
At this time, I also noticed a sheaf of papers he was holding. George's name was on one and he had written "none" as I had. The camp commander then told me, "You've got a bad attitude. This biography is a common thing and all prisoners comply." I repeated, "That information is none of your business." Despite this response, they let me sleep a little that night.

I was tossed into a dingy, seven-by-seven-foot cell furnished with a pair of cement slabs for beds. Seeing that room totally convinced me I was not going to be rescued by any particular helicopter. There was a window high up the wall, but the ledge of an overhanging roof prevented seeing all but a splinter's width of sky. At the end of the beds were leg irons with wood stocks. I've been to Madame Tussaud's wax works so I knew what *those* were. But, after a short time there, I was hauled back to the Star Chamber, given a blanket and managed to sleep about three hours. Though my back and feet ached, I believe I was pumping sufficient adrenalin to abate the pain. The discomfort was less of a problem than others I now faced. Later there was to be torture the likes of which I would have dearly traded for the back pain.

What happened after you slept?

The next day is when I had the real bad session. They woke me just before dawn, escorted me to a shower where I'd hardly begun to bathe when they hauled me back to the Star Chamber. The Voice of Vietnam was booming over camp radio speakers. The interrogator held a Buzz Sawyer comic strip depicting the EA-6B.

"Does *Constellation* have the EA-6B?" he asked. "I don't know," I said. He fixed me with cold eyes.



'I was determined not to scream. I forced myself not to because I believed that screaming would constitute a sign of weakness.'

"You better know," he replied. I was then put in the ropes. The North Vietnamese are absolute masters at rigging the human body with ropes and irons. You've heard or seen ex-POWs demonstrate the technique. One rope, like a parachute shroud line, was hung loosely around my neck. My arms were pulled behind my back and another rope wrapped tightly around my elbows. They clamped iron cuffs on my wrists and on my ankles. They have a way of getting the very last twist out of a rope. I suppose, when they yanked on it, they were trying to pull my arms out of my shoulder sockets. I was blindfolded and lay on the floor completely trussed up. I have to admit that I became very frightened.

Did you scream?

No. You may not believe this, but I was determined not to scream. I forced myself not to because I believed that screaming would constitute a sign of weakness.

You must have wanted to.

Oh God, yes. They kicked me around and pulled on the elbow ropes with unbelievable force. I uttered plenty of oohhs and aahhs but I didn't scream. After about an hour and a half, they loosened me up, removed the blindfold and sat me on a stool.

The interrogator pursued questions on the EA-6B and I denied knowledge of it. They slugged me often. I began to grow incoherent and mumbled things. The camp commander arrived with the biography form which now included three statements referring to condemnation, confession and apology which they wanted me to sign. "Everybody completes these biographies," he stated and showed me one which was so superbly worded that I hesitated to believe it was freely written. I refused to sign.

They tightened me up with the ropes and now introduced a nine-foot-long rusty bar, like that used by weight lifters, into the scheme of things. They inserted the bar through the ankle irons and, on the floor again, they proceeded to kick and slug me. They dragged me across the deck so that skin was torn from my body. (I developed scars on my wrists and shoulders which I still have.) One shoulder was so badly gouged from the floor-dragging that the open wound drained for three months afterwards. I was jumped on and kicked constantly. A man we called Straps and Bars was the expert in this sort of endeavor. He directed the punishment. Many times a guard jammed a foot in my back and pushed with his leg while pulling on the elbow ropes. It occurred to me that no human being should ever inflict such pain on another.

Toward the end, I was very incoherent and mumbling. But I told them nothing. After a full ten hours, the mauling finally ended. I guess they gave up on me.

I was taken back to my cell and because of my poor condition — I was unable to move my arms from alongside my body and was virtually

helpless — they assigned an Air Force captain named Ron Bliss as my roommate. For four months, during which I couldn't raise my arms, he took care of me like a baby. He bathed me, shaved me, with cold water, by the way, fed me and literally kept me alive. We were eventually cellmates for about a year and a half. I don't have to say how deep my friendship for this man goes.

After this torture, would you say it now became a matter of day-to-day survival over the years?

It was a constant struggle to stay alive.

Could you tell us how long, over the years, you had cellmates?

During the six years and seven months I spent in captivity, 15 nonconsecutive months, were in solitary. The remaining times, I had someone with me, like Ron Bliss in the beginning. I'd be left in solitary for a period, then placed with one or more men. LCdr. Jim Bell and I were together for 14 months from May of '68 to August of '69. Later there were four of us together. At one time, I lived with Bud Day, then lieutenant colonel, now a colonel in the Air Force. He has to be one of the toughest men alive. At times I was in larger rooms with many POWs.

I should explain that there were two types of solitary — solo and isolation. In solo, you were alone but had a cell adjacent to someone else, meaning you could communicate with him through our tapping codes. In isolation, which I did not have to go through, men were completely separated from other POW cells.

What methods did you devise to combat the boredom and impending despair which you must have experienced?

Throughout my captivity and at critical times like my ten-hour session in the ropes, I tried to put my mind elsewhere. The technique which helped me the most was to replay in my mind old ball games in which I had participated, watched or read about in papers and magazines.

I've always been a sports nut. You know, God endows us with weapons to fight adversity. I thought of people like George Shearing, the blind pianist, and how he used his other senses to achieve success. I was gifted with being able to relive games like the famous Baltimore Colts-New York Giants playoff contest which went into overtime. I could "see" Johnny Unitas take the Colts downfield where Alan Ameche romped into the end zone for the winning touchdown. I could vividly recall Ameche shoving off the fans as he tried to get off the field. I could recite the entire lineup for both teams in the 1946 World Series. There wasn't any television in those days but I remembered newspaper accounts. Pictures from the sports section flashed into my mind — like that one with Enos Slaughter sliding underneath the catcher's tag after Johnny Pesky's delayed throw.

I had one problem, though. For the life of me, I couldn't remember the name of the Giants' quarterback in 1965. Y. A. Tittle had been injured and the Detroit Lions traded this new man to New York. I vaguely recalled some TV personality stating that this man would be the saviour of the Giants. For three full years I simply could not remember his name. Using our comm system, I sought help from other POWs, without success. Then one night a group of us were together and some men were singing *That Lucky Old Sun*. When they came to a line they could not remember, they said, "Hey, Jack, how does that line go?" I'll never know why but, at that precise moment, the quarterback's name burst into my mind clear as the proverbial bell. It was Earl Morrall. I was exhilarated. My spirit was lifted a mile. My mind hadn't failed me. I *knew* who the man was. I believe this revelation was one of the greatest lifts I ever had over there.

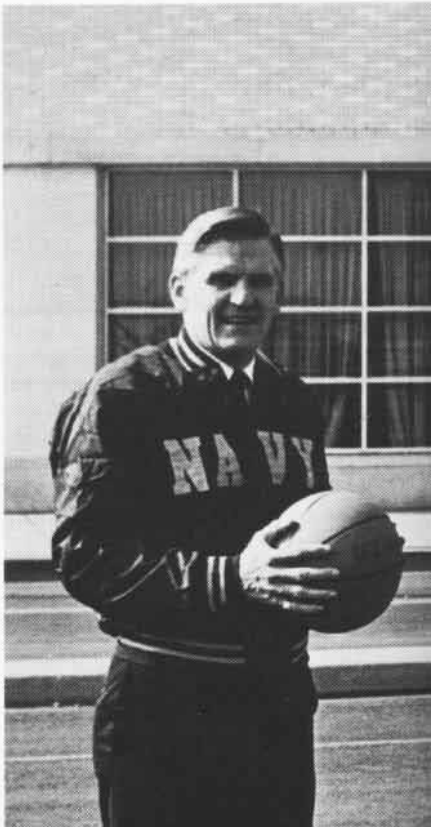
Did you ever reach the point where you said to yourself, "I'm going to spend the rest of my life here"?

Yes. But that kind of thought is dangerous and I fought to rid myself of it. I believe if you pondered the idea of perpetually living in North Vietnam you could reach the point where you wouldn't want to continue. I thought about my injuries, for example, but with the hope and desire to get back home and be able to play ball again. In fact, toward the end when they let us exercise, it was great hitting the volleyball back and forth.

What was the food like?

It got better as the years rolled by. Essentially it consisted of pork fat and soup with greens in it. In the beginning we had no salt or spices but received them later and these additions really helped. We did have some French bread, on occasion, which was very good. We also had soy bean curd, which was good, and infrequently noted a small chunk of fish or meat with a meal. We were fed twice a day, by the way. At a Christmas or two, I recall receiving a glass of beer, also. Still, I lost 50 pounds in captivity.

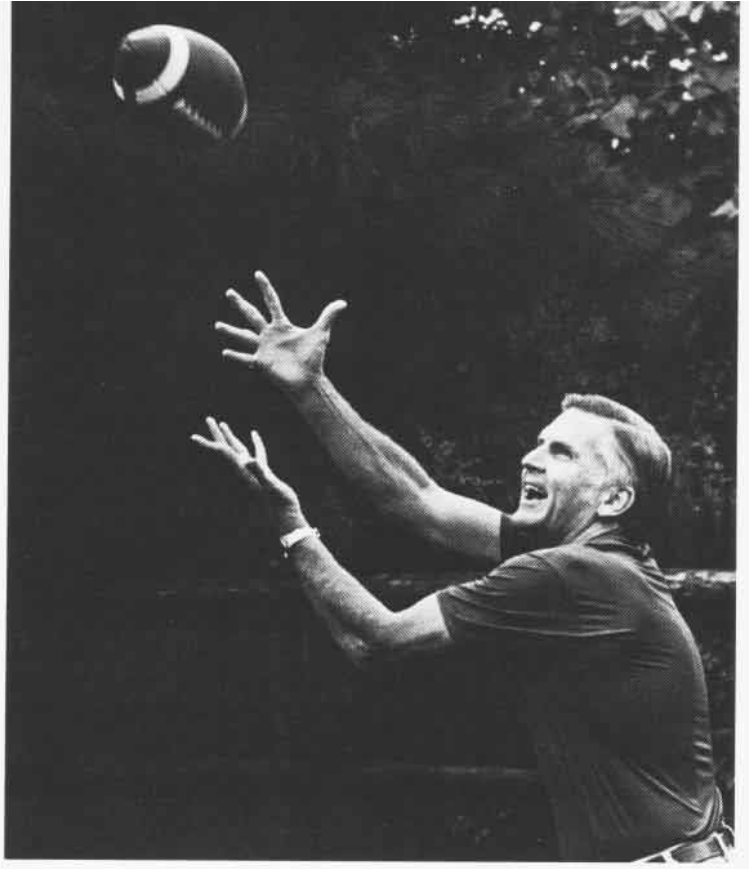
'The technique my mind old



I missed cheese terribly. I've always loved it, especially in cheeseburgers. Hot fudge sundaes came to mind often, also. I would think back to times when I'd had these things and ask myself why I hadn't devoured more at the time. To be able to go out now, anytime I wish, and have a cheeseburger or hot fudge sundae has significant meaning for me.

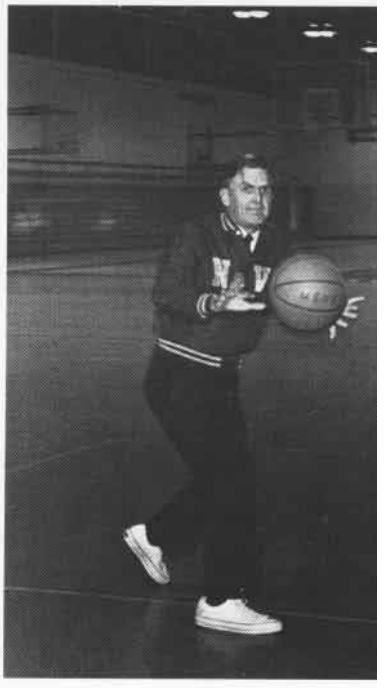
I was lucky in that I did not have dysentery as did so many others, especially in the early days of captivity. A lot of POWs would eat and immediately pass the food through their bodies. The food before consumption looked the same after it passed.

We felt, after a couple of years, that we began receiving vitamins because a lot of the dysentery stopped. I should add that in 1969, after Ho Chi Minh died, conditions improved a bit. I believe that pressure from groups at home also played a part in the treatment being changed.

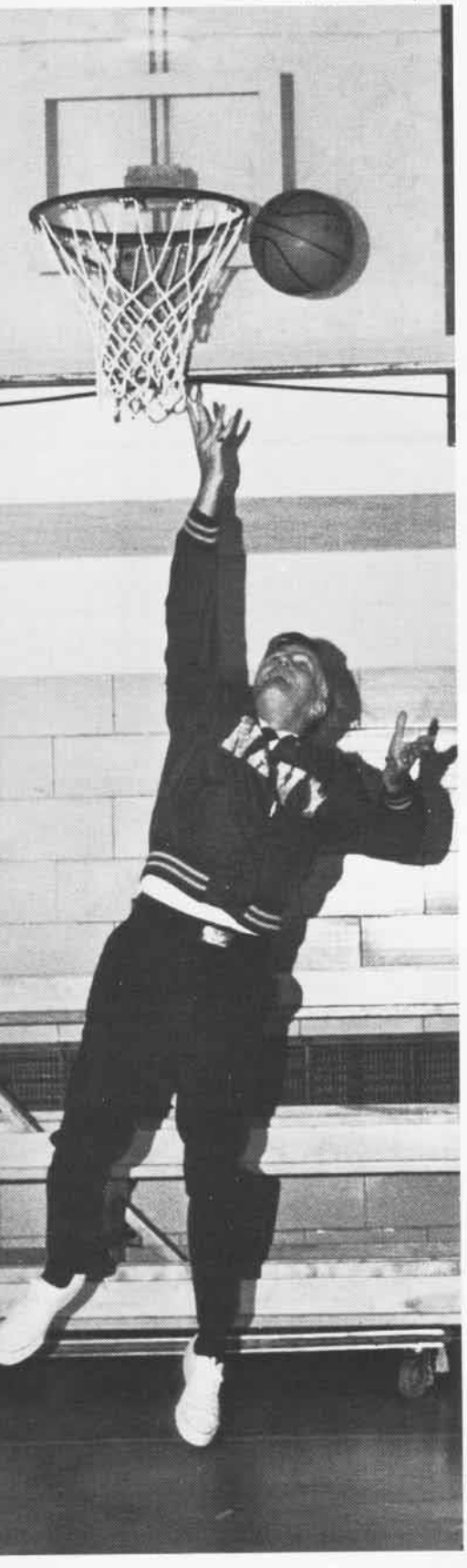


which helped me the most was to replay in ball games. . . .'

JOCS Dick Benjamin



JOCS Dick Benjamin



Did they shower you with propaganda?

Yes. Through literature and the camp radio. Each cell had a speaker and we'd hear the Voice of Vietnam regularly. Any news events they transmitted were, of course, against America and its war criminals. For example, one day after an air raid, the speaker blared, "American air pirates have bombed and destroyed the cigarette factory. Therefore cigarettes will not be issued to prisoners today."

We also viewed films. These movies were shown to groups of 20 or 30. We were brought in individually and separated by cubicles formed with blankets rigged so that, sitting on the floor, we looked over the upper edge of a blanket to see the screen. Guards were positioned throughout the small auditorium to ensure we didn't try to talk.

Once, I reached under a blanket adjacent to me and another POW grasped my hand. That handshake was quite a thrill and USAF Capt. Larry Barbay, the other man, later told me it was one of the greatest feelings he had ever experienced.

Were you allowed to read anything other than propaganda material?

Yes. In the final years, I read Jim Bouton's *Ball Four* and some *Sports Illustrated*. I might add we took advantage of a POW who had an extensive background in foreign affairs and took a course from him on that subject — through our communication system, of course. In fact, we were able to keep up with many current events through the "late shoot-downs." We learned of the Mod look and started to taper our hair a bit. In the earlier years, though, the haircuts were pretty much standard and the Vs did the cutting. It was a traumatic experience for some if the barber didn't "like you." Quite often a V would "accidentally" gouge a man's cheek or the side of his head with the clippers.

Did the beatings continue throughout captivity?

We always got slapped around. Some poor guys, who for one unknown reason or another irked a particular guard, would be hauled from their cells without warning and roughed up badly. If a guard didn't "like you," *so to speak*, he usually had a free hand to knock hell out of you. Sometime after my bad session, by the way, I was put on my knees for an hour and a half for refusing to fill out that damn biography. The SRO (senior ranking officer) ultimately got the word out to us to go ahead and fill these out, which we did.

Did the threat of punishment deter efforts at communication?

No. There was always someone who had the courage to try to communicate with you. I cannot emphasize enough how important it was for us to keep each other's spirits up. Little phrases like "hang in there," or "we're with you, baby," made all the difference in the world when you were down in the dumps. You gain much, in my view, by living with men undergoing torture, yet so full of spirit. You know, whenever there's a chance to see a fellow POW, I grab it. My house is always open to them.

Were you given any mail from your wife, Pat?

In the fourth year, I received a seven-line letter. I eventually received a total of seven from Pat. I was very lucky. Some men didn't receive any.

Jack, many thousands of words have been written to describe the brutal treatment you men suffered. No one who has not been a POW could ever really know what it's like to experience such an ordeal. Perhaps, however, you could tell us what the ingredients are: what one must have to survive and prevail throughout the grim days and years of deprivation and confinement. Is there a way a man could satisfactorily prepare himself to go through what you have?

The best way I can answer that is to say this: Remember that you are an American and that you come from the greatest country in the world. Never take the American way of life for granted. Appreciate freedom.

It isn't necessary to be well

versed in your country's history, but it helps. Just remember that, even with all its faults, there is nothing better than to be from America, to be an American. Acceptance of these facts provides you with a foundation upon which you build a resistance to those who would take away that freedom. You can attend every survival school in the military inventory, which of course is a positive contributing factor to survival, but, in the end, every man can be broken if the captor sets his mind to it.

But you can be broken and not be defeated. You can prevail, knowing what you have back home, what there is to return to. I don't hate the North Vietnamese. I feel sorry for them. Those people have no idea what freedom is like — to be able to walk down the street or go for a ride in a car. Their movements are rigidly controlled. I would suspect that to take a trip in that country you'd have to get written permission from higher authority.

Another thing helped me. I've been blessed with a wonderful wife and family. Throughout my captivity I never worried about Pat and the welfare of our children because I knew she would do a super job. This knowledge gave me tremendous hope.

Now that I'm back, I am even more pleased at the wonderful job Pat did. I sincerely regret losing the nearly seven years of my life, but I am continually impressed at how well the children have developed.

During all your years in Hanoi, did a period of time ever arise where some measure of humor came back into your life; that is, was there ever an occasion to laugh about any subject?

A sense of humor was mandatory, but I can't say there was much to laugh about. I do remember an incident where nine men were manacled at the ankles to their wooden beds. Something occurred which, for some reason, made them laugh. Perhaps it was the sheer ridiculousness of the situation. Here they were, wrapped in irons which fit so snugly against their raw, sensitive skin that even the slightest twitch rendered agonizing pain. Anyway, they began to laugh, and the laughter shook their bodies, resulting in atrocious suffering right along with the laughter. They had good American spirit.

I think it was this same sort of spirit we saw in the people who wore our bracelets and welcomed us home. The letters I've received since coming home have been out of this world. Unbelievable. For example, one girl, a young lady from Kentucky, had been wearing a bracelet with my name on it for years. She wrote me saying she was coming to greet me in Norfolk. She didn't expect to see me personally but she did want to give me the bracelet. Would you believe, she drove 18 hours, all the way from Kentucky, just to be in the crowd when I got back.

Going back a bit, could you describe your feelings about the American air raids in the final, decisive stages of the war?

Great, soaring joy! The only bad part was after the raids, when the planes went away. This would depress us temporarily.

Those B-52s really shook the buildings in Hanoi. We could see the explosions but not the bombers.

March 18, 1973

Dear Commander John Fellowes,

Congratulations, you're home! I knew you would make it. So how does it feel to be home? I guess before I go any further, I should introduce myself. My name is Jeanne Debons, I'm 16 and have been wearing your bracelet since the beginning of August last year, faithfully. I haven't taken it off purposely till now.

You wouldn't believe what your bracelet and I have been through. It's really become a part of me. Right now I feel naked taking it off. Once when I was swimming at a party, your POW bracelet came off without me noticing and later I found it in the pool. All my friends said that you had drowned because of what happened. I could probably fill ten pages full of everything that has happened.

While I was writing this letter, watching the Chinese Ballet, I saw a commercial for the Dick Cavett show with you on it. You probably wouldn't believe how excited I got. I called all my friends, so everybody watched you.

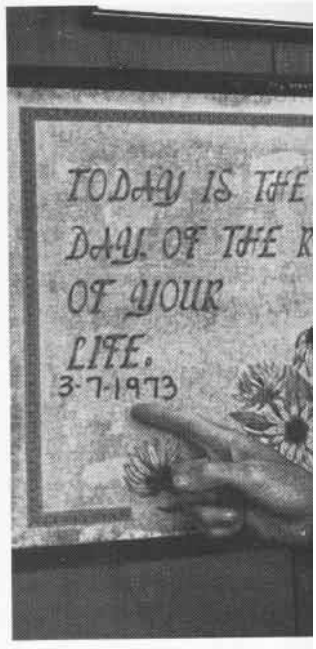
I'm really proud of you, and ever since the day I got your bracelet, I've said a prayer every day. Well, they were answered. I'd really like to meet you someday. And maybe I will. If you get a chance maybe you could write me back. You couldn't believe how happy that would make me.

I'd like to tell you that all of you were great, and I was proud I had your POW bracelet.

Thank you for standing up for my (our) country. It's people like you that make it what it is today.

Yours truly,

Jeanne Debons



When did you feel that you would someday be released?

In 1972 our hopes were up. POWs, who had been held in camps outside of Hanoi, began arriving and we felt we would soon be getting the green light to freedom. We became convinced that the heavy raids at the end of 1972 would force an end to the war.

Finally, on the second of February 1973, we were told we'd be released. We were advised we would be sent out in small increments. We were measured for trousers, shirts and jackets which were kept in storage until the actual date of departure. My group was scheduled to go on February 27. Unfortunately, diplomatic problems arose and we were delayed. On March 4, the big day arrived.

We woke in the morning and looked outside. The weather was zero-zero, completely clobbered, fog right down to the deck. We kind of mumbled to each other that we wouldn't be going home that day after all since the C-141 wouldn't be able to get into Gia Lam Airport, especially since navaids were limited there.

Happily, the ceiling lifted a couple of hundred feet and somehow the Air Force got that C-141 on deck. In the compound we were lined up in ranks, determined to go out with as much dignity as we could muster. This was to be a military operation.

We filed into a bus and began the long ride out to Gia Lam. I remember seeing a child smiling and waving at us until her mother reprimanded her.

Our trip took us on a circuitous route to the airfield. As we approached, we saw the *Starlifter* parked in the distance, its nose pointing at us. What a sight!

It seemed forever as we drove the roundabout way, but we finally arrived at the airport terminal which was a rather crude-looking affair. There were plenty of people on hand and many in North Vietnamese military uniforms.

We stood in ranks waiting for our name to be called before stepping forward. General Ogan of the U.S. Air Force stood near a table where a V we called the Rabbit sat reading off our names. Since the Rabbit was the chief torturer, it was not difficult at all to register a look of hate at him as we passed into friendly hands. My name was called and the general shook my hand.

"You are the most beautiful person I've ever seen, General," I said.

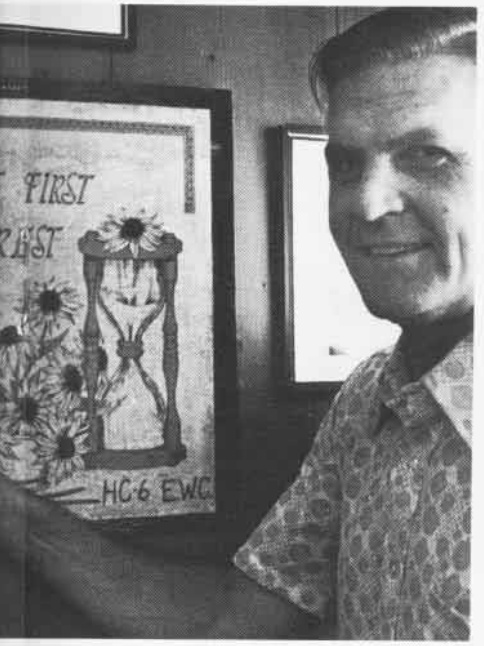
As I stepped away, a strapping Air Force captain came alongside me and said, "You look like you could use some help." He guided me toward the ladder of the aircraft where I saw a nurse in uniform. As I approached her, I noticed her perfume and told her so. It was that fragrance of an American woman wearing perfume that made me acutely aware, for the first time in all those years, how really dirty our place of captivity had been.

Entering the airplane, the feeling continued — the wonderful smell, the cleanliness. It was such a sharp, beautiful contrast.

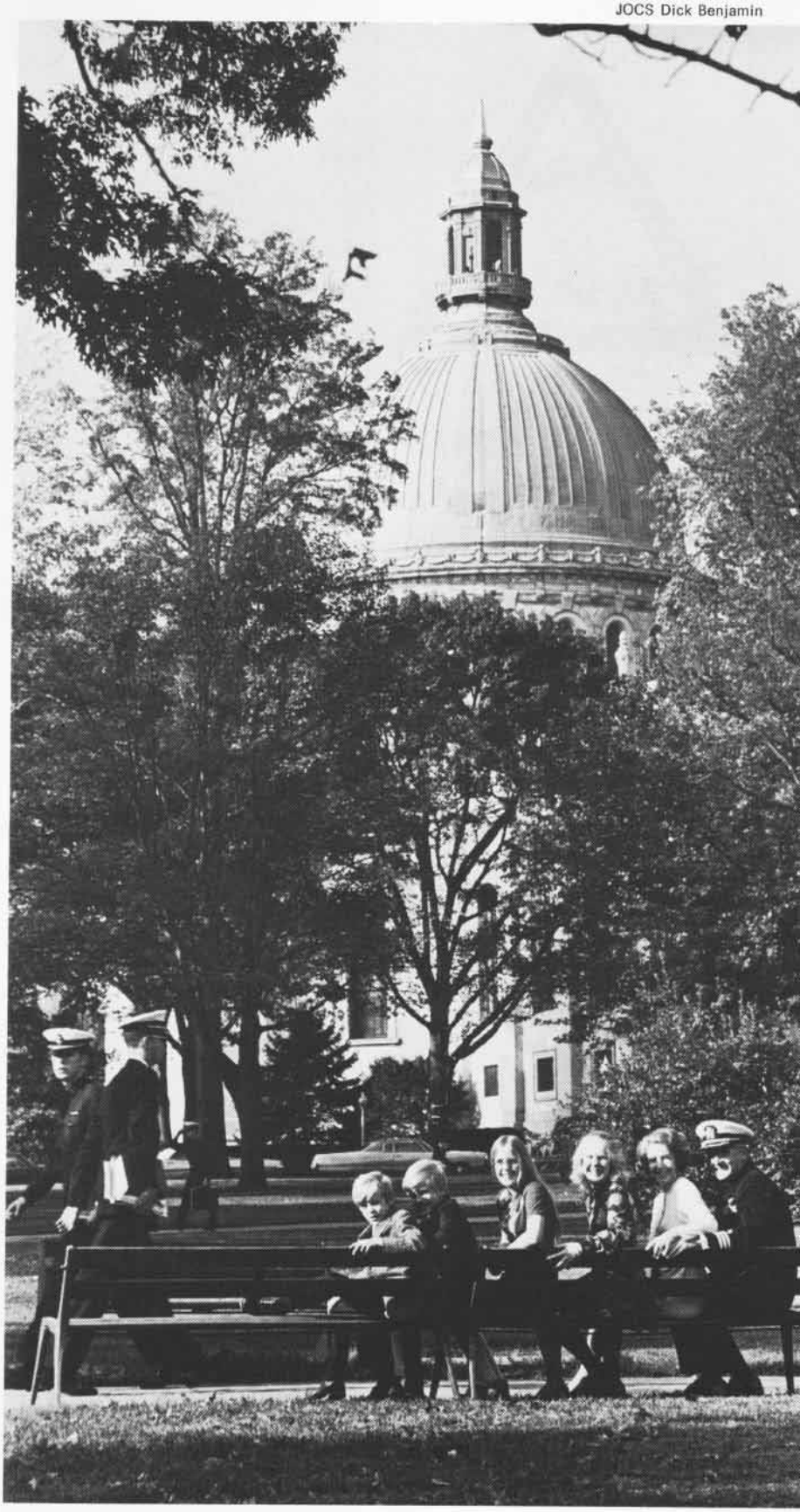
The engines were quickly started and it seemed only seconds before we were taxiing out. At this point we weren't shouting with elation. We were still in North Vietnam. Then we took off and the pilot transmitted on the intercom, "Gentlemen, you are now leaving North Vietnam."

We climbed out and, finally, as we went feet wet, the pilot said, "You are now over water, you are free men." We had been sitting there, sort of wringing our hands together, restraining the outburst that was sure to follow. At that last announcement, it broke loose. The deafening shouting began and it was smiles all the way.

Our trip back, including the stops in the Philippines and Hawaii, was impressively organized. We had first class treatment all the way. I couldn't believe the reception in Hawaii. We landed there in the middle of the night and there must have



JOCS Dick Benjamin



been five thousand people waiting for us.

After a stop at Andrews AFB we boarded a C-9 for the final leg to Norfolk where Pat and the kids were waiting. The weather was bad there and it was doubtful we could get in, but nearby NAS Oceana had better conditions, so we went there.

Meantime, the families were driven from Norfolk to Portsmouth Naval Hospital where we rendezvoused with them. It was dark when we arrived. I was driven up to the steps of the hospital in a black military vehicle. As the car door opened, I saw my wife and children for the first time in six years and seven months.

They all looked great. The kids seemed to remember me well but I got concerned about Tommy, my youngest, who's ten now. He was only three when I left and he seemed reluctant to say anything to me. I asked Pat, "What's wrong with him?" She advised me to exercise patience. Well, Tommy and I walked off a little bit from the others and kind of looked at each other. For a moment there was silence. Then Tommy said the words that lifted me about three feet off the ground.

"Dad," he said, "you're the greatest."

Cdr. Fellowes was home!

THE SELECTED AIR RESERVE

Composite Squadrons

Two Fleet Composite Squadrons became a part of the Naval Air Reserve Force on September 1. VC-12 was formed at NAF Detroit and VC-13 at NAS New Orleans. VSFs 76 and 86, RTU-76, and VAs 5Y1 and 5Y2 were disestablished when the new VCs were commissioned.

Here and There

The CHIEF OF NAVAL RESERVE, Vice Admiral Damon W. "Hutch" Cooper, along with his deputies, Rear Admirals Frank B. Guest, Jr. (Commander, Naval Surface Reserve), Thomas B. Russell (Commander, Naval Air Reserve), and Richard G. Altmann (Deputy Chief of Naval Reserve) took part in the filming of the first Naval Reserve SitRep in a New York studio in August.

The 14-minute film, *The Word*, is designed to inform all Naval Reservists of new concepts and plans for the Reserve Force. It was directed by Commander Carl Ragsdale, officer in charge of Naval Reserve Combat Camera Group, Atlantic.

VS-83 has completed the move to NAF DETROIT from NAS Lakehurst, N.J. The squadron, the only one of its kind in the Midwest, flies the S-2E *Tracker*. Thirty active duty personnel and 140 Weekend Warriors made the transfer.

VA-305, POINT MUGU, carqualed aboard *Lexington* in September at Pensacola. It was the first carquals for the attack squadron since it acquired A-7A *Corsairs*. Lt. John Distad recorded *Lex's* 325,000th landing and Commander K. A. Webster, OinC, counted his 500th.

At NAS WILLOW GROVE, Reserve Antisubmarine Warfare Tactical School announced a first in its 22-year history. Lieutenants Norma (OpCon-8T-2) and Frank (VP-69) Mathes are the first married couple to attend the basic two-week ASW course at the same time. The SAR husband and wife team is from NAS Whidbey Island.

Civilian citations for "outstanding service to the community" were presented to two members of NAF DETROIT by Deputy Sheriff Donald Vandenheede of Macomb County. Captain Howard H. Soester, C.O. of the NAF, and Lt. Oscar I. Harris, along with three MPs, were cited for saving the life of Richard E. Demaske on June 15. The elderly gentleman lost control of his automobile, skidded off the road and overturned, landing partially submerged in a 15-foot-wide canal. The five men leaped into the water and dragged the injured man from his car within 60 seconds.

Tradevsman Airman Apprentice Mark M. Hargrove, NARDet MIRAMAR, set an academic record at Avionics Technician Class A School, NATTC Memphis, Tenn., when he completed the 20-week course in 13 weeks with a final grade average of 98.19.

A groundbreaking ceremony for a 78,000-square-foot hangar to house Patrol Squadrons 60 and 90 took place at NAS GLENVIEW in August. The VPs are scheduled to begin transition from P-2 *Neptunes* to P-3 *Orions* in April. The new structure for the *Orions* is expected to be finished by January 1975.

Present for the ceremony were Rear Admiral T. B. Russell, Commander, Naval Air Reserve, and Captain Paul G. Merchant, C.O. of the NAS.

At NARDet, NATC PATUXENT RIVER, Md., it all began with four people, a hammer, a pencil and a good idea. Six months later, it became one of the finest bachelor enlisted quarters on the East Coast. Most of the volunteers who originally began work on the renovation of Building 491 "knew the difference between a hammer and a saw, and that's about it." But four Reserve Seabees came to the rescue, volunteering their experience and knowledge.

Chief Builder Paul Troup, Chief Utilitiesmen Elmer Hensel and Elmer O'Bruba, and Chief Steelworker Clifford Williams fly in on the airlift from Pittsburgh each month in order to drill at Pax River. They began working on the project on drill weekends and later volunteered to put their 14-day AcDuTra to good use, cutting, shaping and framing.

According to Commander Tom J. Meighen, OinC of the Det, the self-help program "saved the taxpayers approximately $8,300."

Quote of the Month

It all began when Commander Leonard "Ski" Kaine, former C.O. of VF-301, NAS Miramar, took off as the leader of a two-plane section — the "enemy" in simulated aerial dogfights off the San Diego coast.

On the first intercept, the controls of his *Crusader* stuck during a climbing left turn. Cdr. Kaine determined that both the spoiler and aileron on the starboard were full up. He managed to get the F-8 under control, limped home at 300 knots with full left stick and rudder, and made a perfect landing at 180 knots (somewhat faster than normal). It was later determined that the control problem was caused by a fractured aileron connecting link assembly.

Commenting on the flight, he said, "It was rather strange flying straight and level with full left stick, but I was very careful — as careful as I would have been milking a mouse."

JO1 Russ Egnor

PHAN K. R. Nugent checks camera control of VFP-306 RF-8G, left. Below, Sea Kings of HS-75 come home. LCdr. R. J. Schug VP-68, checks his position during AcDuTra flight, lower left. Lower right, AsstSecNav Johnson (right) talks with Captain B. R. Dixon at San Diego.

AcDuTra is a way of life for all Naval Air Reservists. From their home bases they move to many points in the U.S. and overseas.

On their last AcDuTra, the members of VP-68, Patuxent River, deployed to Rota where they flew their P-3s on operational patrols with TF 67. The *Peeping Toms* of VFP-306 winged their RF-8Gs to Miramar from NARU Washington, D.C. They shot motion picture footage for a Smithsonian Institution study, did aerial mapping for NAS Lemoore and MCAS 29 Palms and pre- and post-strike photography for CVWR-30. Members of VS-71 and HS-75, Lakehurst, spent their two weeks at Quonset Point training with Atlantic Fleet ASW forces. And 19 NASRUs celebrated their 20th anniversary on board the *Queen Mary* at Long Beach where they spent two days attending symposiums on present and future projects. Assistant Secretary of the Navy James E. Johnson told them "The role of the Naval Reserve as an integral part of our country's total force cannot be overemphasized. If we expect to defend our country in time of war, then the Navy and the Naval Reserve must truly become One Navy."

at Sea with the Carriers

MIDWAY GETS IT ALL

When *Midway* sailed into Tokyo Bay and docked in Yokosuka, Japan, on October 5 she was greeted by the cheers of 350 *Midway* families on the pier. Her arrival at her new home port marked the beginning of a two to three-year tour with the Seventh Fleet.

The home-porting at Yokosuka represents an effort by the Navy to cover current commitments in a time of fewer active ships, and permits the men of the carrier and air wing to spend more time with their families.

For the families, it all began in mid-June when the Dependents Assistance Team (DAT) arrived in Yokosuka. Working with representatives of Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, the Public Works Center and the Naval Supply Depot, DAT set up a detailed plan for scheduling transportation, coordinating housing assignments, receiving advance notice of arrivals and making arrangements to assimilate the *Midway* and CVW-5 families into the Navy community.

DAT is headed by Lt. Jerry Herbster, assistant catapult officer on *Midway*, and includes four officers, six

Oblivious is the only word for photo above. At right, Midway pulls into her new berth. Far right, Matthew looks for his dad, AC2 James Pensyl. Photos by JOC Tom Thompson.

petty officers and their wives. They worked round-the-clock to keep life from becoming a problem for newly arrived dependents.

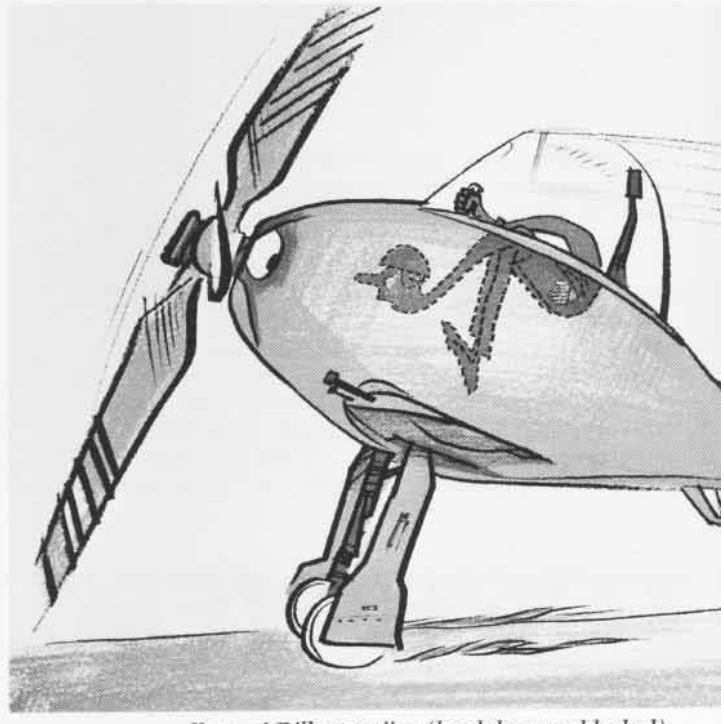
"Moving to Japan presents the usual problems of moving anywhere — along with a few unusual ones," explains Lt. Herbster. "Transportation, housing, furniture, mail, school registration and ORIENTation — getting used to a new country, its language and its people."

About 1,000 *Midway* and CVW-5 families are expected to move to Japan.

TOGETHER

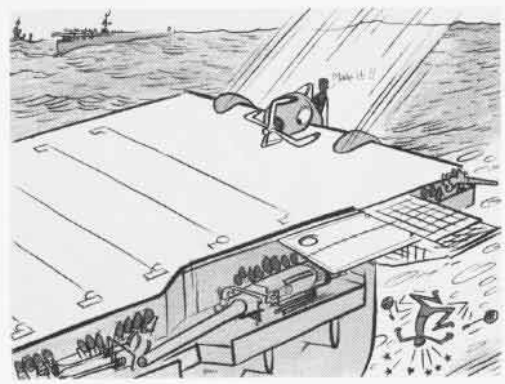
The scenes, top and above, were repeated again and again as Midway changed home ports. The man who helped put it all together, DAT man Jerry Herbster, below.

Dilbert and Spoiler Revisited

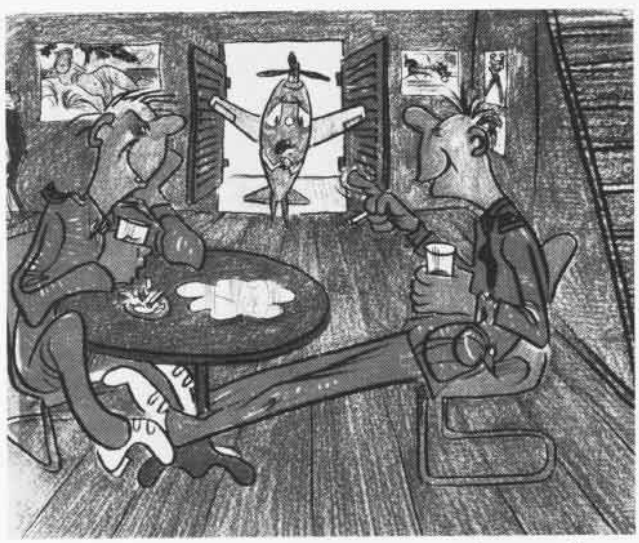


X-ray of Dilbert taxiing (head down and locked).

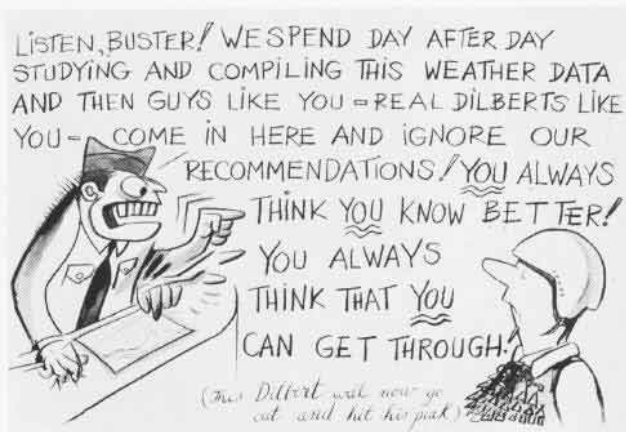
In World War II and for a few years after, a pair of Navy characters played a significant role in the training of aviation personnel. Dilbert represented the ne'er-do-well pilot with a disastrous propensity for making mistakes. His counterpart on the ground, Spoiler, was equally inept in his maintenance-related duties. The artwork was comical but the impact of these safety blurbs evoked positive thought and actions. Messages which emanated from the two are, we think, as appropriate now as they were then. In future issues, Dilbert and Spoiler will return with more sage admonitions for those in the flying community.

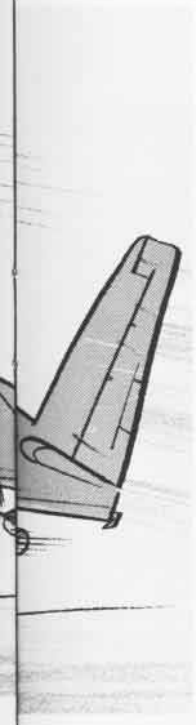


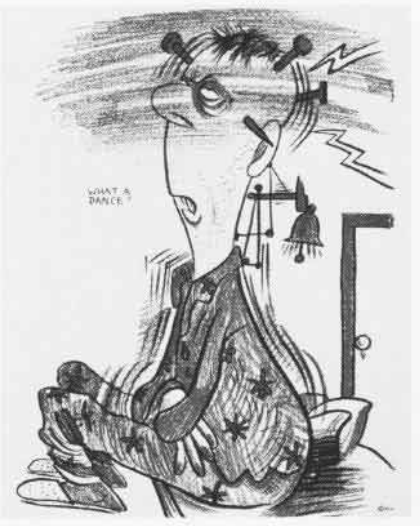
Don't* anticipate *the cut!



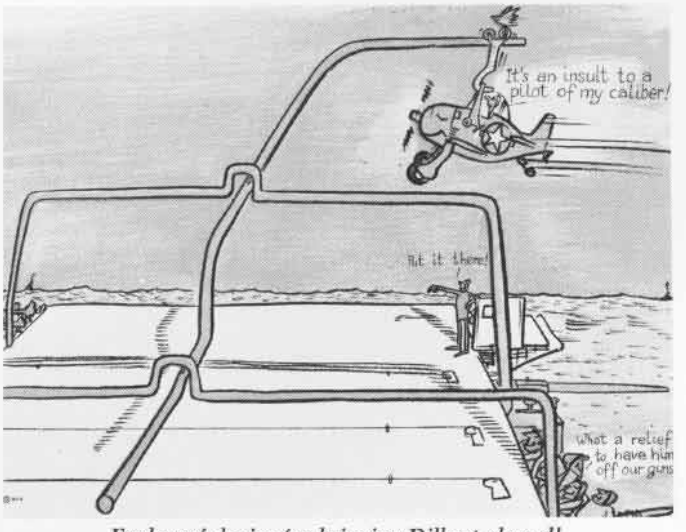
"Dilbert — dear Dilbert — come home with me now!"



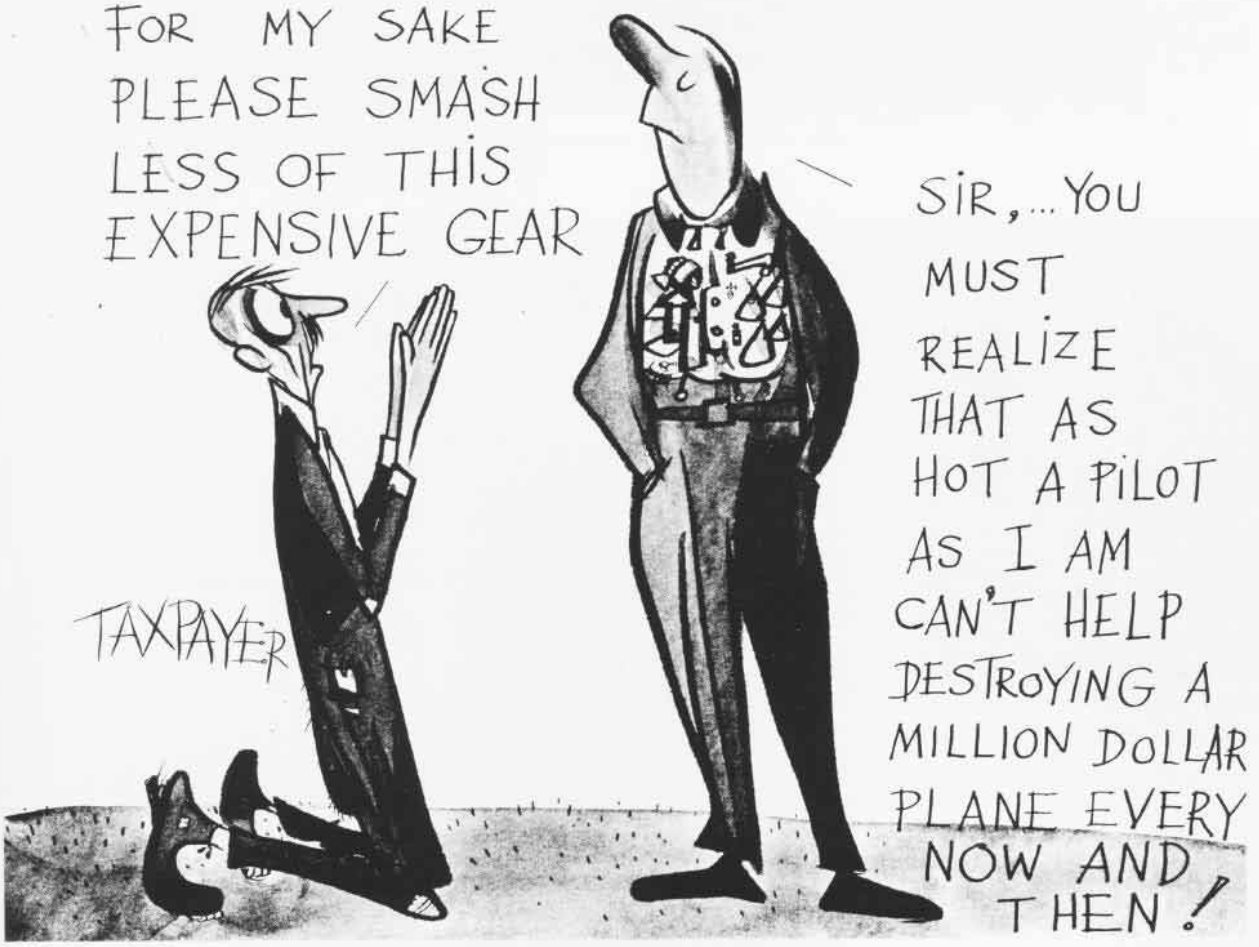




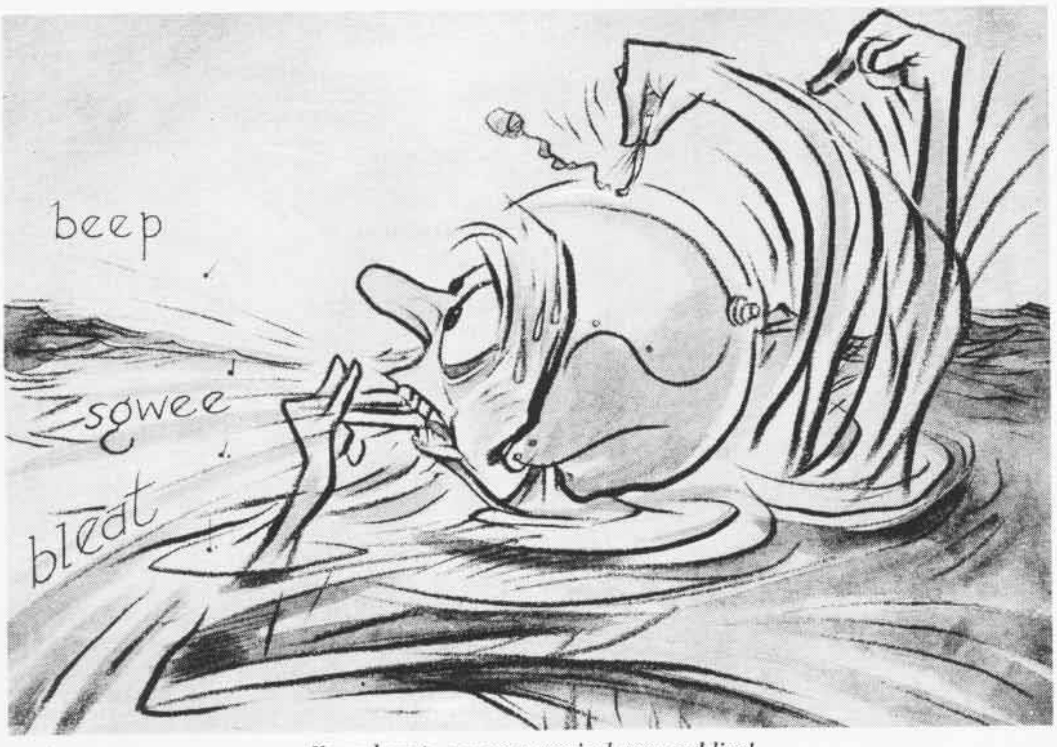
Dilbert was the life of the party last night, but he will now go down and kill his section leader!



Foolproof device for bringing Dilbert aboard!

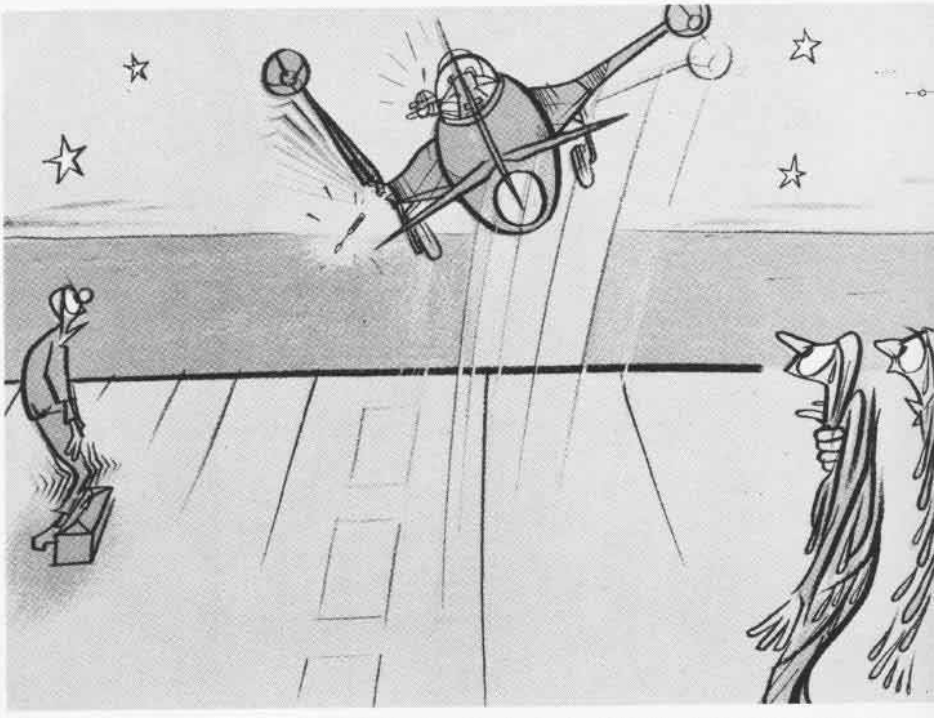


Dilbert and Spoiler



Know how to use your survival gear and live!

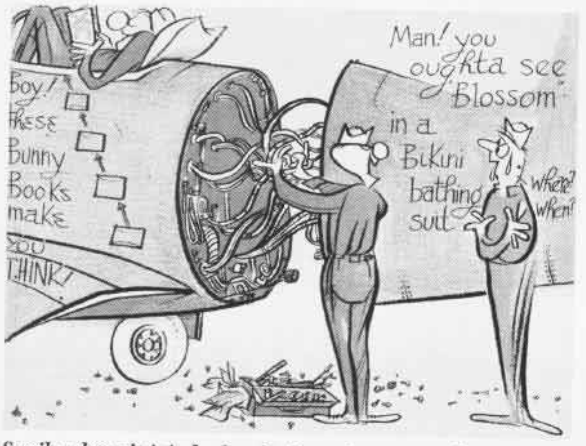
Dilbert flew awfully high Saturday night and plenty low Sunday!



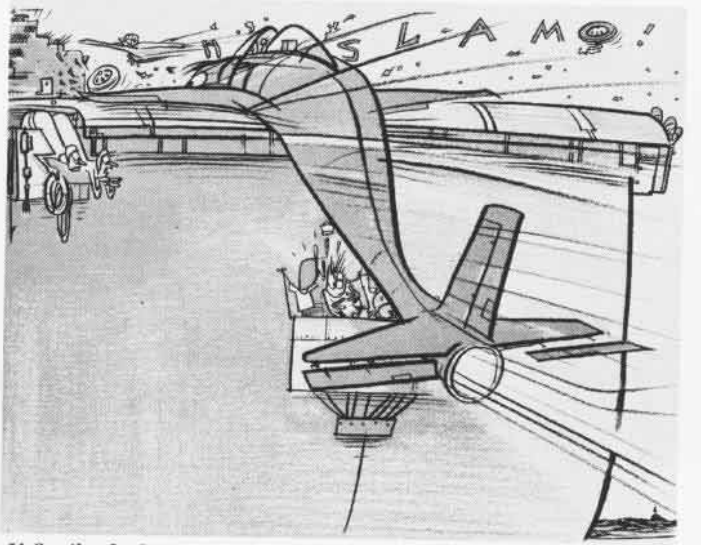
Spoiler left a screwdriver in the vicinity of a wing lock pin. (Use the tool count system!)

Good old Dilbert wastes *fuel all the way out and back, and then screams to be taken aboard* at once!

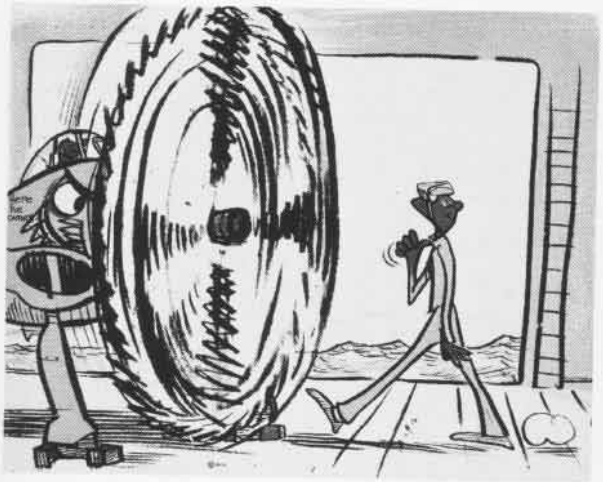
It's easy to pick out Spoiler — he always uses a screwdriver incorrectly.



Spoiler doesn't join hydraulic lines; he weaves them! And if you guess right, your gun charger will lower your wheels!



If Spoiler had an ounce of imagination, he'd see why you stay off the fantail during operations.



True story! He was saying: "Boy, when I hit Frisco!"

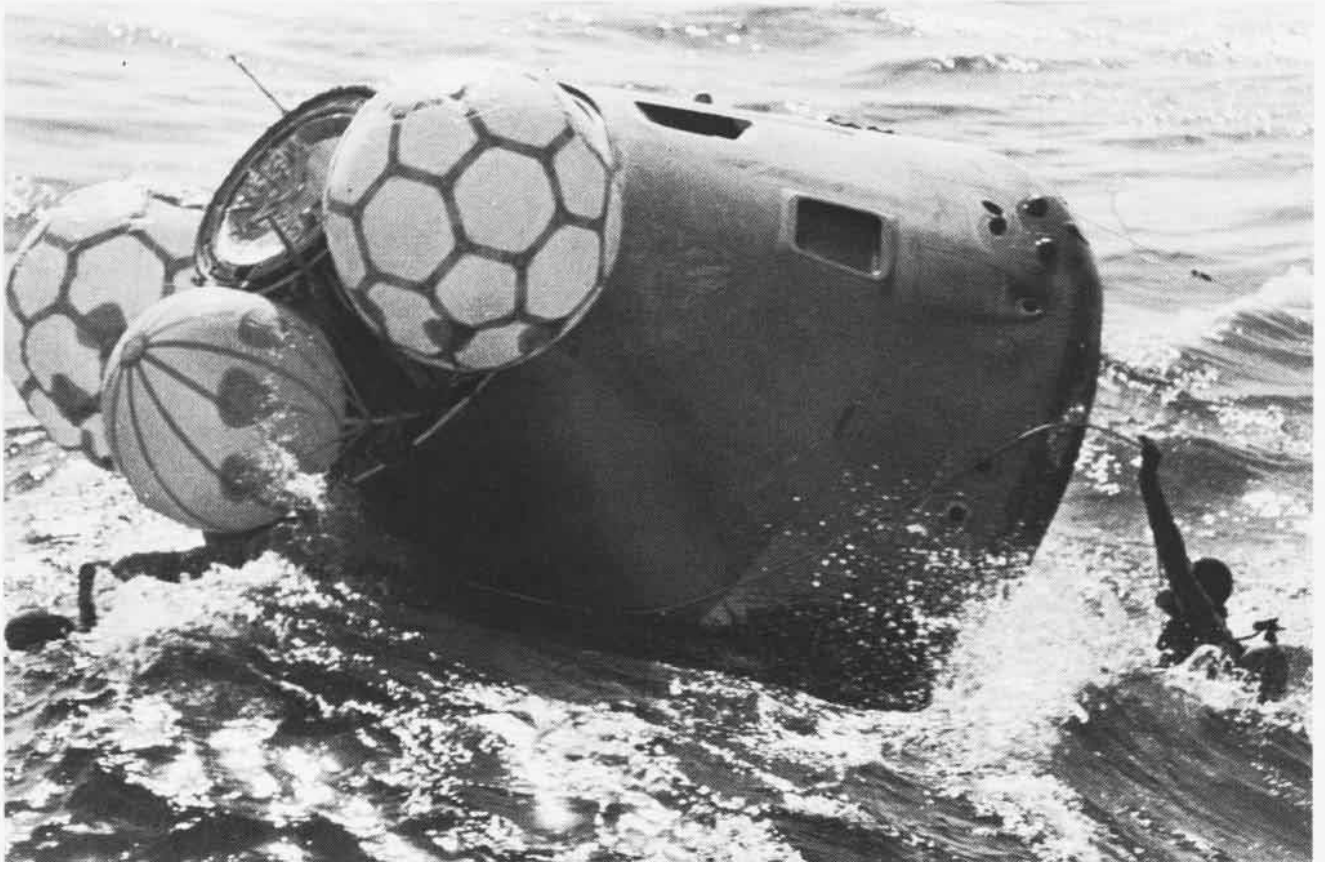
The Count is Fifteen

First Seven

Original astronauts pose together in early days: Carpenter, Cooper, Glenn, Grissom, Schirra, Shepard, and Slayton.

Longest Mission

UDT scuba diver from New Orleans rights Skylab III in eight-foot waves of the Pacific, ending man's longest space mission.

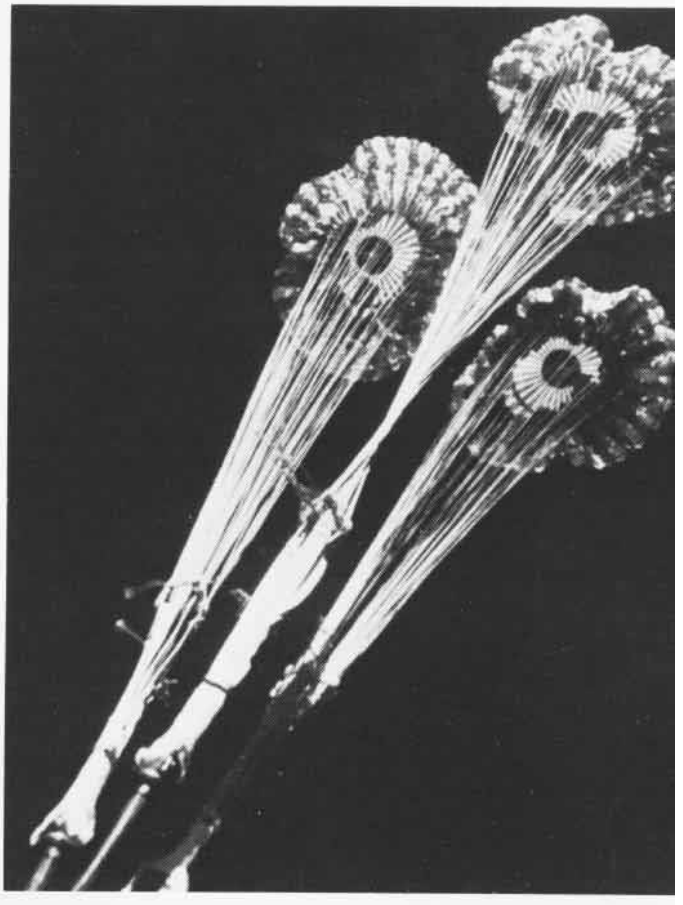


First Astronaut

Ham, who flew America's first suborbital space flight, toasts NASA's 15th anniversary by sampling Skylab space drink of concentrated grapefruit juice. Ham is in retirement at the National Zoo.

Spider Webs

Three main ring sail parachutes of the Skylab III command module unfurl during descent in Pacific.



Skylab Workshop

Closeup view of the Skylab space station photographed from Skylab III command module during "fly-around" look before docking.

NAS Jacksonville

A Community Project

By R. E. Rehberg, USNR

Is there a city anywhere that would turn down an opportunity to earn $400 million a year in return for a $1 million investment in land?

Probably not. The catch, of course, is to recognize that opportunity and then work to make it happen. The people of Jacksonville, Fla., did just that back in 1939 and have profited ever since.

It was then that the citizens of Duval County voted overwhelmingly for a million dollar bond issue to purchase 3,260 acres at Ribault Bay near Mayport, Fla., and then gave clear deed and title to the Navy for use as an air station and carrier base.

In the years since, the Navy has repaid the initial investment many times over. Today the NAS Jacksonville complex alone, with a replacement price tag of nearly $2.5 billion, contributes well over $200 million a year to the city's economy. With Naval Station Mayport and NAS Cecil Field, both located within the city limits, the total increases to almost $400 million. The Navy directly involves one of every four people — including the families of military and civilian employees: 85 percent of the payroll is returned to the local economy. With recent base closings and the shift of units and personnel to Jacksonville, the payroll is expected to grow.

But the Navy in Jacksonville means more than a huge payroll and a healthy economy. Navy personnel, military and civilian, make substantial contributions to community affairs. They are involved in civic life and action. Community relations have always been given top priority. Today these activities include hundreds of events — from tours for local groups and Boy Scout encampments to search and rescue and mercy missions.

The Navy/Jacksonville relationship began in 1935 when the Chamber of Commerce first learned that the Navy was considering the southeastern area for a major aviation training facility. A congressional board visited Jacksonville and liked what it saw — a strategic location, fine harbor possibilities and weather that made flying possible every day of the year. But other Florida cities, including Miami, were equally suited and Jacksonville had to come up with a special incentive.

Astute bargaining and lobbying by the Chamber of Commerce ensued and, in April 1939, based on the board's recommendation, Congress passed and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law a bill earmarking $15 million for the construction of a naval air station at Jacksonville. Within four months, the Duval County Air Base Authority was formed. It found land south of the city on what was known as Black Point, and the bond referendum was passed. The land on which was located Camp Johnson, an Army camp (later renamed Camp Foster, a once-a-year National Guard camp), was donated to the Navy on July 18, 1939. Construction began two months later.

The timing for both Jacksonville and the Navy couldn't have been better. In 1940, with war looming, the Naval

An Orion from VW-4 flies over Jacksonville.


NAVY

NAS Jacksonville

Aviation program was given the highest priority. The new facility at Jacksonville was to be a training base for Navy pilots and aircrewmen. But more money was needed to create the facilities necessary to do the job. The original $15 million was bolstered by a second appropriation of $68 million and around-the-clock construction activity by over 1,700 area construction workers continued. The base was commissioned NAS Jacksonville on October 15, 1940, a year and a month after the first spade was turned. Captain Charles P. Mason became the first commanding officer.

Fourteen months later, Pearl Harbor catapulted the nation into war and NAS Jacksonville became a beehive of activity. Two planes took off and landed every minute to log more than a million flight training hours during the war years.

In April 1941, George Shortlidge and Clifford Hemphill were the first cadets commissioned Naval Aviators

at NAS Jacksonville. By the end of the war, they had been followed by more than 11,000 pilots and 10,000 aircrewmen who had undergone primary and operational training at the base to earn their Navy wings.

During those first years, the air station expanded rapidly. Within two years of its commissioning, over 700 buildings had risen among the pines and palms at Black Point. Three runways over 6,000 feet long were in operation as well as seaplane ramps and a half-mile-long flight line with overhaul and repair facilities. An 80-acre Navy hospital was completed in which as many as 1,800 patients were being cared for by 1945.

Auxiliary air stations were opened in late 1941 at what today is Cecil Field and at Lee Field near Green Cove Springs, 17 miles south of Jacksonville.

In 1942, NAS Jacksonville changed from intermediate to operational training with the appointment of Rear Admiral A. B. Cook as Chief of the Naval Operational Training Command. The fine points of torpedo delivery, patrol, scouting and observation were but a few of the lessons to be learned. Later the flag officer commanded the Naval Air Technical Training Center where thousands of civilians in uniform were taught how to handle the complicated instruments of war before they went to the fleet.

Except for short intervals, the two star flag of a rear admiral has flown over NAS Jacksonville. In 1945 the Air Training Commands moved to Pensacola and a new command, Commander Fleet Air Jacksonville, was established with the mission of fleet support. This command was replaced on July 1, 1973, by Deputy ComNavAirLant for Tactical Air/Commander Tactical Air Atlantic, with Rear Admiral Lawrence R. Geis commanding.

By 1945, German POWs were arriving for internment at NAS Jacksonville and thousands of sailors and Marines were ready to go home. The station became the largest separation center in the southeast and the conversion to peacetime operation was on. Active duty flyers became Weekend Warriors and, in 1946, the Naval Air Reserve Training Unit was established.

Disarmament in the postwar years affected the Navy and Jacksonville. Once again the Chamber of Commerce swung into action. Its Naval Affairs Committee went to work and helped in changing the mission of the air station from a training base to a major fleet support installation with ComFAirJax at the helm.

The jet age was dawning and, in 1948, the Navy's first jet carrier air groups came to Jacksonville. By April 1949, Jacksonville was the number one plane capital with 50 percent of the fleet air striking force in the Atlantic area stationed there.

In the early Fifties, the Korean Conflict made new demands on the Navy — for more sophisticated air surveil-

Jacksonville residents met their new Navy neighbors at a 1945 air show at the air station, opposite top. Only two weeks after Pearl Harbor, Naval Aviators and their aircraft stood ready to join the war effort, opposite. German POWs were incarcerated at NAS Jacksonville during WW II, above. In 1944, 2,000 evacuees from a hurricane found a safe haven at the station's supply department, above right.

lance and attack capability. This led to the establishment of patrol squadrons at Jacksonville and, in 1952, Fleet Air Wing 11 began operations there. To handle their aircraft, P-2 *Neptunes* and more recently P-3 *Orions*, as well as the WC-121 *Super Connies* of the *Hurricane Hunters* (VW-4), one more congressional appropriation, this time some $15 million, came to Jacksonville for the construction of a massive hangar and support facility.

While all this was happening at NAS Jacksonville, efforts were being made to increase the Navy's presence in the area. This effort is fondly referred to as the "Mayport deal."

In February 1948, the Naval Affairs Committee prepared and sent to the Secretary of the Navy "A Prospectus Regarding Southeastern Naval Operating Base — Combining the Facilities of Carrier Basin, Ribault Bay, Mayport; United States Naval Air Station, Jacksonville; Green Cove Springs, Auxiliary Air Station; Outlying Fields, Jacksonville; and Oil Terminal, Jacksonville." It was an ambitious project.

The proposal wound up in Congress in late 1948. However, the Mayport deal was delayed until 1950 when Congress passed a $17 million emergency appropriation bill releasing $1.9 million to start dredging and construction of a carrier pier at Mayport. Again the needs of a nation at war worked in favor of the citizens of Duval County to perpetuate their good relationship with the Navy.

It was a great day when, on October 29, 1952, USS *Tarawa* (CVS-40), the first capital ship to ever enter the St. Johns River, steamed into Mayport. Additional funds for a second carrier pier at Mayport were sought and secured in 1954.

So it has gone for over 30 years in Jacksonville: the unbeatable combination of the community and the Navy.

Today the combination is working again. When it was announced recently that 5,000 people, ten ships and numerous aircraft would be transferred to the Jacksonville area as a result of base closings elsewhere, the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce quietly sent two of its members to Washington. Their mission: to make sure the Navy knows it is welcome

Jacksonville has deliberately and purposely carved a niche of its own in Navy-community relationships.

NAS Jacksonville continues to grow and change as new squadrons and facilities come aboard.

Jacksonville Today

Today the mission of NAS Jacksonville, "To maintain and operate facilities and provide services and material to support operations of aviation activities and units of the operating forces of the Navy and other activities and units as designated by the Chief of Naval Operations," is carried out under the leadership of Captain William G. Sizemore.

Commands and squadrons stationed aboard are:

Commander Tactical Air, Atlantic Fleet.

Commander Patrol Wing 11 with Patrol Squadrons 5, 16, 24, 45, 49 and 56. The VPs fly P-3Cs.

Weather Reconnaissance Squadron Four, flying P-3As modified for weather recon.

Commander Naval Air Reserve Unit.

Commander Carrier Air Wing Reserve 20.

Attack Squadron 203, flying A-4Ls.

Patrol Squadron 62 with P-3As.

Fleet Aviation Specialized Operational Training Group.

Fleet Intelligence Center, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe.

Fleet Weather Facility, Jacksonville.

Naval Air Rework Facility.

Naval Regional Medical Center, Jacksonville.

Naval Air Technical Training Center, Jacksonville.

Marine Aviation Training Support Group.

Marine Air Reserve Training Detachment.

Naval Drug Rehabilitation Center.

Units expected to come aboard are Commander Helicopter Antisubmarine Wing One; Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadrons 1 (SH-3A, D, G and H), 5, 7, 11 (all flying SH-3Ds), and 15 (SH-3Hs); and Helicopter Composite Support Squadron Two (SH-3Gs).

Additional detachments of Fleet Aviation Specialized Operational Training Groups and Naval Air Maintenance Training are expected to report aboard in the future.

Corrosion Control

By Commander Jeremy D. Taylor, Commanding Officer of VA-46

As the purse strings of austere times are drawn tighter, the conservation of our airplane assets is becoming more and more important. Eliminating aircraft accidents is an obvious goal. Not as obvious, but equally important, is improving the maintenance and material condition of these virtually irreplaceable fighting machines.

The price of an aircraft continues to soar. As a larger slice of the defense budget dollar is apportioned to provide increased salaries and to finance programs to retain invaluable human resources, the purchase of new aircraft has become a very restricted expenditure. Therefore, taking care of what we have is a top priority requirement incumbent on all hands.

In the carrier business the constant exposure to corrosion-causing salt spray of our many-metalled aircraft has led to an unprecedented corrosion prevention and treatment program. Every carrier aircraft squadron is staffed with a corrosion team, or "crud crew," supported by the squadron work centers. The crud crew is specifically responsible for a relentless corrosion control effort.

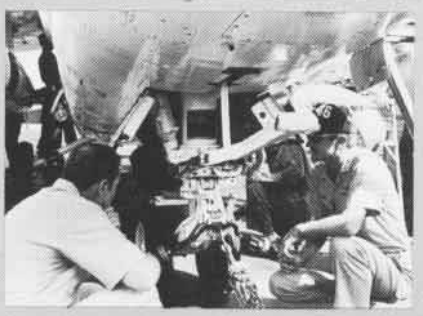
To evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of these teams, Commander Naval Air Force, Atlantic has assigned his subordinate commanders specific audit responsibility. Every aircraft squadron is evaluated before, at midpoint and immediately following each deployment. The audit teams are comprised of "old pros" in the corrosion business; their inspections of the aircraft are detailed and uncompromising. In addition to inspecting the squadron's aircraft, the audit team reviews anticorrosion programs and aircraft log books and interviews corrosion team personnel. It leaves behind a detailed evaluation of the squadron's corrosion prevention and treatment programs, identifying the strong and weak points of each. It always leaves a suggested cure for a discovered weak spot. The audits keep the squadrons hustling in the never ending battle against corrosion, and the teams' visits provide welcome outside assistance to maximize a squadron's corrosion effort.

The mid-deployment corrosion control audit recently conducted on Attack Carrier Air Wing One aircraft aboard USS *John F. Kennedy* (CVA-67) at Palma, Mallorca, by the 17-man team from ComFAirMed was a typical inspection. The team, headed by Commander F. B. Boice, spent four days climbing over, under and around the air wing's aircraft, digging into logs and records, and quizzing air wing personnel. No punches were spared in the criticism of discovered faults. However, criticism was balanced with praise when effective procedures were found. The audit team left behind a list of recommended corrective actions and concluded its audit with a briefing of the ship's C.O., Captain John Dixon, before filing a summary report with ComNavAirLant.

While the audit is never called an inspection, the team and everyone concerned knows that it is. But the team doesn't use checklists and the aim of the visits is assistance through critical evaluation.

As the struggle to preserve our costly aircraft assets intensifies, it is vital that the Navy aid squadron commanders in maintaining the highest possible standards of material readiness of their aircraft by providing outside expertise and guidance.

The corrosion control audits are providing the assistance and extending the all hands efforts within the squadrons to preserve the Navy's aircraft.



When the ComFAirMed corrosion control team visited John F. Kennedy (CVA-67) to inspect her air wing's aircraft, there wasn't much they missed. AMS1 A. A. Black inspects wing of VA-46 Corsair as AMS1 H. Mack observes, top. Above, AMS2 E. Payne inspects VAW-125 aircraft. AOC P. W. Wells gives his attention to a VF-32 Phantom missile launcher, above right; and ASCS H. J. Bates did the honors to a VA-46 Corsair nose wheel, right.

NANEWS INDEX JAN. TO DEC. INCLUSIVE 1973

Master Model Maker

Mr. Ryser E. Ericson of Fairfax County, Va., exhibits some of his 75 finely detailed models of military aircraft. A civilian with 17 years in the Navy Department, he is an expert in the field and uses a scale of 1:72 inches. Some versions require a month's spare time in production and are precise in each feature. Mr. Ericson expends considerable effort in research to ensure accuracy. He is especially interested in color schemes and markings and has been involved in this hobby since 1946.

Letters

Patches, Insignias, Plaques?

We are extremely fortunate to have a local artist who has taken time from his busy schedule to do a series of paintings of naval scenes which have proven to be an asset to our recruiting.

At the present time, we are trying to assemble a collection of Navy patches, insignias, plaques, anything Navy, which the artist will arrange and display with his work. The display will be a permanent one.

Any help from your readers will be greatly appreciated.

Douglas M. Rogers, AMEC
Navy Recruiting Station
P.O. Box 1033
Clovis, N.M. 88101

Kudo

I wish to thank you for publishing my request for assistance in the March 1973 issue of *Naval Aviation News*. I also want to express my appreciation to those of your readers who provided information on the Bell AH-1G/J.

James D. Sprinkle
RP #7234
American Aviation Historical Society
8516 E. 11th St.
Tulsa, Okla.

Carrier Patches

My son and I have been collecting naval ship and station patches for a number of years. Now I am putting together a board with carrier patches. I have 26 of them and am looking for jacket patches of USS *Bennington*, USS *Lake Champlain* and USS *Leyte*. Could you help me find someone who has any of these?

Frank A. Jackson, Sr.
International Military Museum
130 Circuit Ave.
Weymouth, Mass. 02188

More

Your magazine, *Naval Aviation News*, has been coming to our library regularly. Our building situation being what it is, our Junior and Senior High Libraries are located in separate buildings. The popularity of your magazine causes the Junior High to be constantly borrowing our copy. If you could please start sending a copy to our Junior High Library and continue sending a copy to the Senior High Library it would be appreciated.

Joyce Lorenz, Assistant Librarian
Soroco High School Library
Box 158
Oak Creek, Colo. 80467

VPs in the Philippines

In addition to my duties as a cryptologic officer, I am working on a project for the Naval History Division, studying the operations of Patrol Wing Ten and other Naval Aviation units in the Philippines from 1924 to 1942.

I am interested in obtaining articles on PBYs in the Philippines, the formation of Patrol Wing Ten, its operations, etc., including VPs 101, 102 and 22, patrols from Luzon, Mindanao, Java, Darwin and the tenders *Preston*, *Childs* and *Heron*. *Langley* also tended the PBYs for a time and, at the end of the withdrawal period for the Netherlands East Indies, several patrols were flown from Perth and Freemantle, Australia. Also needed are pictures of aircraft attached to the Asiatic Fleet, i.e., PBYs, SOCs, OS2Us, J2Fs and earlier T3Ms, T4Ms, JF-1s, O2Us and O3Us, or the bases and areas from which they operated (Cavite, Sangley, Los Banos, Olongapo) as well as the areas listed above. I have been unable to locate any photographs of the PBY-4s used by the Wing while in the Philippines during the period before the war. As a technical extension of the Neutrality Patrol they may have borne special markings, but I would like to find evidence of this.

I have researched the records held by Naval History, and other places, but records of this period are spotty at best due to the pressure of the Japanese advance in the early months of the war.

Any help your readers can give me will be appreciated.

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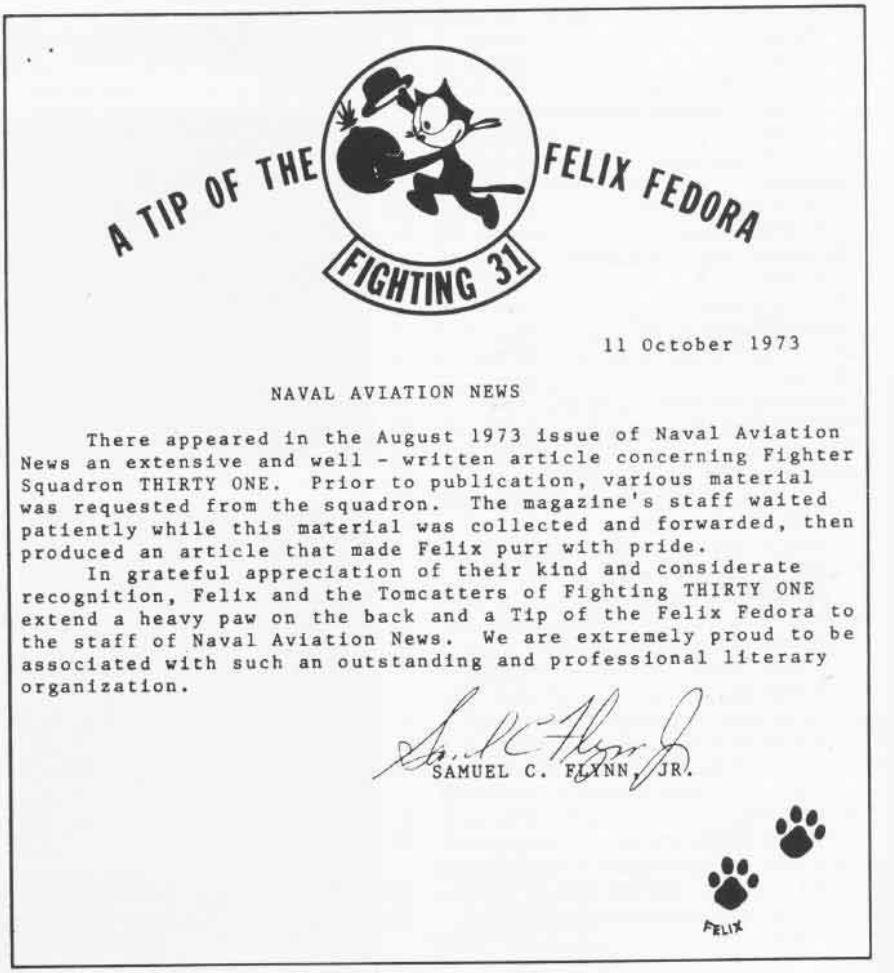

Light Photographic Squadron 206, commissioned June 1, 1970, is a Reserve RF-8G reconnaissance squadron attached to CVWR-20. Based at NAF Washington, D.C., with Commander W. E. DeGrafft as their commanding officer, the Hawkeyes provide photographic support for East Coast units.


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